

Materials Overview: Comprehensive School Redesign

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This section includes materials related to labor-management collaboration around comprehensive school redesign. Interviews were conducted in Hamilton County, Tennessee, to shed light on the district’s successful redesign efforts. Resources from the Chicago Public Schools are included, but district leaders were unavailable for interviews. Other resources (e.g., contracts, Memoranda of Understanding, reports) were collected from websites or through personal contacts. Specific materials include:

School Turnaround Overview.....1

- The Turnaround Challenge (Executive Summary)¹

Chicago Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL)9

- Agreement between the Board of Education of the City of Chicago and the Chicago Teachers Union, Local No. 1, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2012 (excerpt)
- Meeting the Turnaround Challenge: School Case Study, Academy for Urban School Leadership, Harvard School of Excellence, Chicago, IL²

Hamilton County, Tennessee.....47

- Perspectives from Sharon Vandagriff, President, Hamilton County Education Association and Dan Challener, President, Public Education Foundation
- Memorandum of Agreement between the Hamilton County Board of Education and the Hamilton County Education Association, 2010-2011 (excerpt)
- When We Decide to Do Something, We Can Work Together to Get It Done. Collaborating in Chattanooga to Close the Achievement Gap—A Case Study from Philanthropy’s Role in Fostering Partnerships: Collaborating with Unions, Schools Districts and Communities³
- Reducing the Achievement Gap Through District/Union Collaboration: The Tale of Two School Districts⁴

New Haven, Connecticut113

- Appendices A and B to the 2009 agreement between the New Haven Public Schools and the New Haven Federation of Teachers, New Haven, Connecticut
- *(See section on Principal Evaluation for more materials on New Haven)*

Other Resources to be Available for Download from www.WestEd.org/schoolturnaroundcenter/labormanagement

Chicago, Illinois

- U.S. Department of Education interview with Don Feinstein, Executive Director, Chicago AUSL. Available at <http://www.ed.gov/oese-news/ausl-chicago>
- Chicago AUSL FAQ's

Hamilton County, Tennessee

- Handley, C., & Kronley, R. A. (2006). *Challenging myths: The Benwood Initiative and education reform in Hamilton County*. Chattanooga, TN: Kronley & Associates.
- Kaboolian, L., & Sutherland, P. (2005). *Win-win labor management collaboration in education*. Washington, DC: Education Week Press.
- Potts, K., & Chatis, C. (2006). *District approaches to improving Tennessee's high priority schools—Hamilton County Department of Education 2006*. Nashville, TN: Offices of Research and Education Accountability, Comptroller of the Treasury, State of Tennessee.
- Public Education Foundation. (n.d.). *Lessons learned: A report on the Benwood Initiative*. Chattanooga, TN: Author.
- Silva, E. (2008). *The Benwood Plan: A lesson in comprehensive teacher reform*. Washington, DC: Education Sector.
- U.S. Department of Education (2010). Exploring successful turnaround models. *School Turnaround Newsletter, 1*(2). Washington, DC: Author.
- URLs:
 - Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Interest-Based Bargaining: <http://www.fmcs.gov/internet/itemDetail.asp?categoryID=131&itemID=15804>
 - U.S. Department of Education interview with Dan Challener, President of the Public Education Fund. Available at <http://www.ed.gov/oese-news/benwood>
 - What is Integrative or Interest-Based Bargaining? http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/interest-based_bargaining/?nid=1283

¹ Mass Insight Education & Research Institute. (2007). *The turnaround challenge (executive summary)*. Boston, MA: Author.

² Mass Insight Education & Research Institute. (2009). *Meeting the turnaround challenge, school case study: Academy for Urban School Leadership, Harvard School of Excellence, Chicago, IL*. Boston, MA: Author.

³ Foster, M. (2005). *When we decide to do something, we can work together to get it done. Collaborating in Chattanooga to close the achievement gap—A case study from philanthropy's role in fostering partnerships: Collaborating with unions, schools districts and communities*. New York, NY: Grantmakers for Education Member Briefing.

⁴ National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (2007). *Reducing the achievement gap through district/union collaboration: The tale of two school districts*. Washington, DC: Author.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Turnaround Challenge

Why America's best opportunity to dramatically improve student achievement lies in our worst-performing schools

School Turnaround: a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that produces significant gains in student achievement within two academic years.



Prepared through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Despite steadily increasing urgency about the nation's lowest-performing schools – those in the bottom five percent – efforts to turn these schools around have largely failed. Marginal change has led to marginal (or no) improvement. These schools, the systems supporting them, and our management of the change process require fundamental rethinking, not incremental change.

What does successful school turnaround entail?

- **Recognition of the challenge.** Turnaround is a different and far more difficult undertaking than school improvement. It should be viewed within education, as it is in other sectors, as a distinct professional discipline that requires specialized experience, training, and support.
- **Dramatic, fundamental change.** Turnaround requires transformation. Schools that effectively serve high-poverty, highly-diverse student enrollments similar to those that typically attend our lowest-performing schools tend to operate very differently from traditional models.
- **Urgency.** Turnaround should produce significant achievement gains within two years, while readying the school for subsequent maturation into a high-performance organization.
- **Supportive operating conditions.** Turnaround leaders must be empowered to make decisions regarding staff, schedule, budget, and program based on mission, strategy, and data.
- **New-model, high-capacity partners.** Turnaround demands skillful change management at the ground level. States, districts, and foundations must develop a new resource base of external, lead turnaround partners to integrate multiple services in support of clusters of turnaround schools.
- **New state and district structures.** Turnaround requires innovation from policymakers at all levels. States and districts should create special turnaround offices that – like turnaround schools themselves – have the flexible set of operating rules and the resources necessary to carry out their mission.

This Executive Summary provides an overview of The Turnaround Challenge, a much larger report produced by the Boston-based Mass Insight Education & Research Institute, in conjunction with a broad range of national partners. The report is the first element of a multi-phase project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. For more information and access to the full report, go to www.massinsight.org.

1. The Problem – and the Vision

THE PROBLEM

Five percent or 5,000 of America’s one hundred thousand public schools, representing more than 2,500,000 students, are on track to fall into the most extreme federal designation for failure by 2009-10.

Many more schools will be placed in less extreme categories; in some states, the percentage will significantly exceed 50%. But a good portion of these schools will be so designated because of lagging gains in one or more student subgroups, under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. These schools face challenges that may be solved by fairly modest forms of assistance.

But the 1,100 schools already in Restructuring – the most extreme designation – as well as those likely soon to reach it represent a level of persistent failure that commands swift, dramatic intervention.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Turning around the “bottom five” percent of schools is the crucible of education reform. They represent our greatest, clearest need – and therefore a great opportunity to bring about fundamental change.

Why Schools Fail

These schools fail because the challenges they face are substantial; because they themselves are dysfunctional; and because the system of which they are a part is not responsive to the needs of the high-poverty student populations they tend to serve.

The school model our society provides to urban, high-poverty, highly diverse student populations facing 21st-century skill expectations is largely the same as that used throughout American public education, a model unchanged from its origins in the early 20th century. This highly challenged student demographic requires something significantly different – particularly at the high school level.

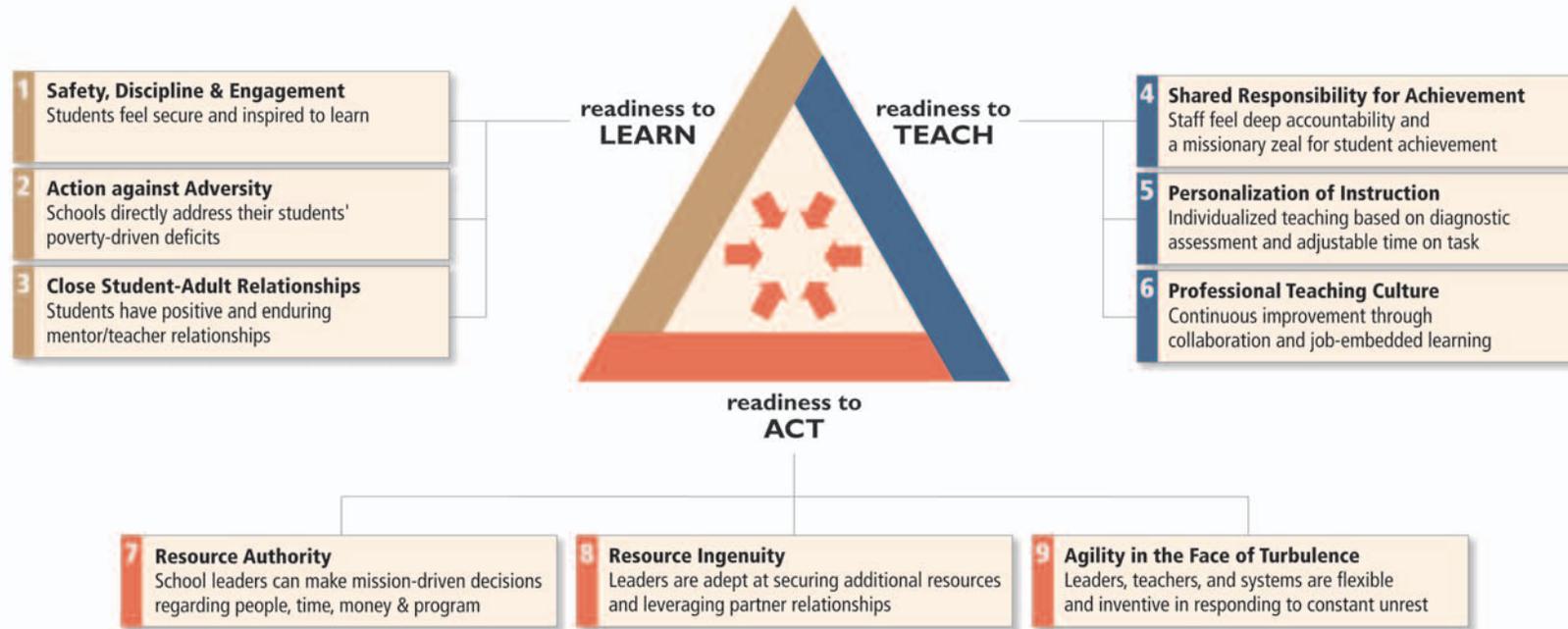
Turnaround: A New Response

Standards, testing, and accountability enable us, for the first time, to identify with conviction our most chronically under-performing schools.

***Turnaround* is the emerging response to an entirely new dynamic in public education: the threat of closure for underperformance.**

Dramatic change requires urgency and an atmosphere of crisis. The indefensibly poor performance records at these schools – compared to achievement outcomes at model schools serving similar student populations (see The Benchmark, next page) – should ignite exactly the public, policymaker, and professional outrage needed to justify dramatic action. If status-quo thinking continues to shield the dysfunctions that afflict *these* schools, there can be little hope for truly substantial reform throughout the system. Turnaround schools, in other words, represent both our greatest challenge – and an opportunity for significant, enduring change that we cannot afford to pass up.

How High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools Do It: The HPHP Readiness Model



The Benchmark

A small but growing number of high-performing, high-poverty (HPHP) schools are demonstrating that different approaches can bring highly challenged student populations to high achievement.

How do they do it? Extensive analysis of HPHP school practice and effective schools research revealed nine strategies that turn the daily turbulence and challenges of high-poverty settings into design factors that increase the effectiveness with which these schools promote learning and achievement. These strategies enable the schools to acknowledge and foster students' *Readiness to Learn*, enhance and focus staff's *Readiness to Teach*, and expand teachers' and administrators' *Readiness to Act* in dramatically different ways than more traditional schools. This dynamic "HPHP Readiness Model" is represented in the graphic above.

A "New-World" Approach

As understanding of these Readiness elements grows, it becomes clear that HPHP schools are not making the traditional model of education work better; they are reinventing what schools do. We call this "New-World" schooling, in contrast to the "Old-World" model – a linear, curriculum-driven "conveyor belt" that students and schools try (with little success in high-poverty settings) to keep up with.

The New-World model evokes instead the sense of a medical team rallying to each student, backed by a whole system of skilled professionals, processes, and technologies organized and ready to analyze, diagnose, and serve the goal of learning. The converging arrows symbolizing this "New-World" model of education lie at the center of the Readiness Triangle. What happens in classrooms between teacher and student is the most critical moment in the delivery of the education service. But the quality of that moment depends entirely on the readiness of the system and the people who are part of it to teach, learn, and act effectively and in accordance with the mission.

For more information on the magnitude and nature of the turnaround challenge, see Part 1 of the full report, available at www.massinsight.org. For more on the strategies and lessons offered by high-performing, high-poverty schools, see Part 2 and the Supplemental Report (also available at that website).

2. The Challenge of Change

WHAT'S BEEN TRIED

The research on turnaround of failing schools reveals some scattered, individual successes, but very little enduring progress at scale.

Most schools in Restructuring (the federal designation for chronic under-performance) are like organisms that have built immunities, over years of attempted intervention, to the “medicine” of incremental reform. Low-expectation culture, reform-fatigued faculty, high-percentage staff turnover, inadequate leadership, and insufficient authority for fundamental change all contribute to a general lack of success, nationally, in turning failing schools around and the near-total lack of success in conducting successful turnaround at scale.

Turnaround vs. “School Improvement”

Most of what’s applied to under-performing schools today represents an incremental-change effort or an incomplete attempt at wholesale change.

“Light-touch” efforts that redirect curriculum or provide leadership coaching may help some average-performing schools improve, but they are clearly not sufficient to produce successful turnaround of chronically poor-performing schools. This is not surprising, given that high-performing, high-poverty (HHP) schools have evolved such fundamentally different strategies to achieve success, and that turnaround initiatives need additionally to break through existing inertia.

Turnaround, as we are defining it here, is different from *school improvement* because it focuses on the most consistently under-performing schools and involves dramatic, transformative change. Change that, in fact, is propelled by imperative: the school must improve or it will be redefined or closed.

The Inadequate Response to Date

Our collective theory of change has been timid, compared to the nature and magnitude of the need. Most reform efforts focus on *program change* and limit themselves to *providing help*. Some also allow for *changing people*. A very few also focus on *changing conditions and incentives*, especially the degree of leadership authority over staff, time, and money.

Analysis of school intervention efforts to date confirms that they are generally marked by:

- ▶ **Inadequate design:** lack of ambition, comprehensiveness, integration, and networking support
- ▶ **Inadequate capacity:** fragmented training initiatives, instead of an all-encompassing people strategy and strong, integrated partnerships that support the mission
- ▶ **Inadequate incentive change:** driven more by compliance than buy-in
- ▶ **Inadequate political will:** episodic and sometimes confusing policy design; under-funding; and inconsistent political support

Focusing on program reform is safe. It produces little of the controversy that the more systemic reforms (human resource management, governance, budget control) can spark. NCLB, despite its intended objectives, has effectively endorsed and supported risk-averse turnaround strategies through its open-ended fifth option for schools entering Restructuring. The net result: little track record nationally – and that mostly at the district level, not the state – in comprehensive, system-focused, condition-changing turnaround.

The full report and the supplement provide detailed analysis of the most prevalent intervention strategies, and profiles of efforts underway in ten states and four major districts.

What Success Requires: A “Zone” for Effective Turnaround

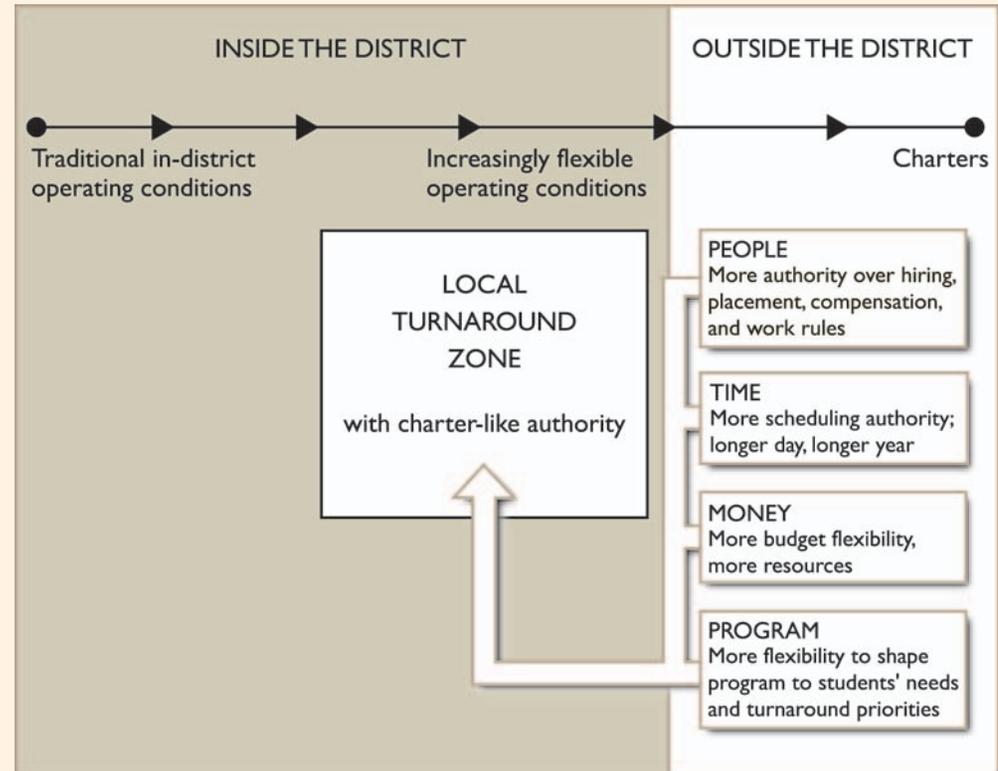
States and districts can engineer more effective turnaround at scale by creating space that supports *outside-the-system* approaches, focused *inside* the system.

The high-performing, high-poverty schools we studied tend to reflect characteristics of highly entrepreneurial organizations. That makes sense. These schools are succeeding either by working outside of traditional public education structures (charters); or by working around those structures, internally (in-district charter-likes); or by operating exceptionally well against the system – with emphasis on *exceptionally*. Lessons from these schools indicate a need for the following elements in any school turnaround effort – all of which reflect characteristics that are not norms, broadly speaking, of traditional inside-the-system public schooling:

- ▶ **Clearly defined authority to act** based on what’s best for children and learning – i.e., flexibility and control over staffing, scheduling, budget, and curriculum
- ▶ **Relentless focus on hiring and staff development** as part of an overall “people strategy” to ensure the best possible teaching force
- ▶ **Highly capable, distributed school leadership** – i.e., not simply the principal, but an effective leadership team
- ▶ **Additional time** in the school day and across the school year
- ▶ **Performance-based behavioral expectations** for all stakeholders including teachers, students, and (often) parents
- ▶ **Integrated, research-based programs and related social services** that are specifically designed, personalized, and adjusted to address students’ academic and related psycho-social needs

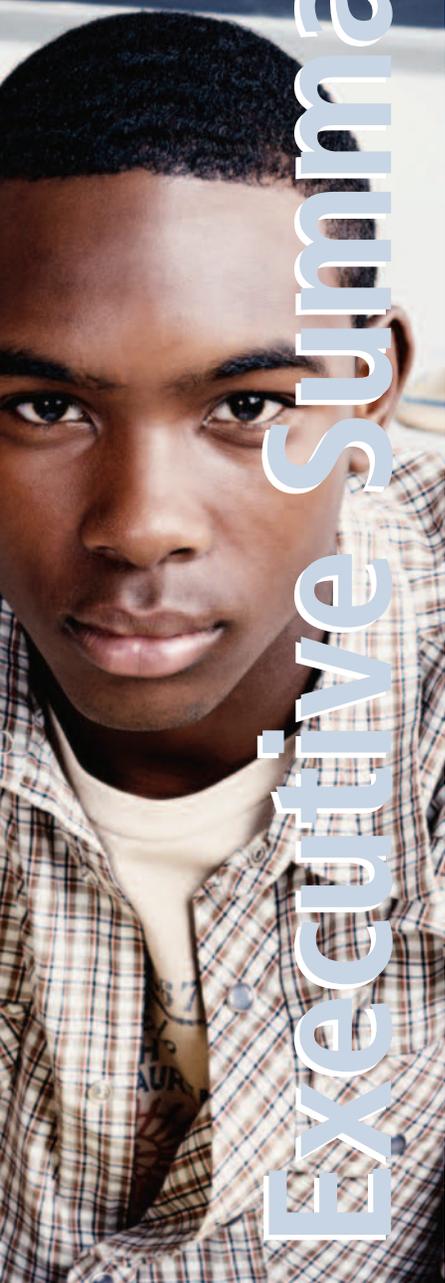
A handful of major school districts – Chicago, Miami-Dade, New York City, Philadelphia – are experimenting with *turnaround zones* in an effort to establish protected space for these kinds of approaches. (See graphic at right.) The opportunity for states is to create this kind of protected space for turnarounds on behalf of all school districts.

Applying *Outside-the-System* Approaches, Focused *Inside* the System



Building the Turnaround Model:

In order to enable school-level reform that incorporates the three “readiness” dimensions of high-performing, high-poverty schools, turnaround zones must be created – either within or across school district lines – that change traditional operating conditions that inhibit reform. The zones establish outside-the-system authorities inside the system, within a framework of strong support and guidance from the district and a lead turnaround partner.



3. The Way Forward

A CALL TO ACTION FOR STATES

Effective turnaround at scale calls for bold, comprehensive action from the state, working together with districts and outside partners.

State governments must take strong action – even in strong local-control states. They must act in concert with districts and outside providers. With rare exceptions, schools and districts – essentially risk-averse, conservative cultures – will not undertake the dramatic changes required for successful turnaround on their own. But while states may have the responsibility to ensure equitable intervention across district lines, they clearly do not have the capacity to implement turnaround on the ground at the scale of the need. Their role is to require fundamental, not incremental change; establish operating conditions that support, rather than undermine, the desired changes; add new capacity in high-leverage school and district roles and establish turnaround partners; and galvanize local capacity where it is currently trapped in dysfunctional settings.

The Three ‘C’s of Turnaround at Scale

Our research suggests that a coherent, comprehensive state turnaround initiative would incorporate three key elements: Changing Conditions, Building Capacity, and Clustering for Support.

Changing Conditions

Turnaround requires protected space that dismantles common barriers to reform. Chronically under-performing schools offer a politically defensible opportunity to create such a space. A few entrepreneurial school districts (Chicago, Miami-Dade, New York) have created such condition-changing zones or “carve-outs” for their neediest schools. But others (Philadelphia, Oakland) have needed intervention from the state to mount similar initiatives.

States should pass regulations (as Massachusetts has) or legislation (as Maryland has) that produce sufficient leverage for all district leaders to create the protected space they need for turnaround to be effective. The best regulations *change the incentives* for local stakeholders, motivating the development of turnaround zones in order to gain their advantages – while avoiding “final option” alternatives that would diminish district and union control.

The condition changes needed for turnaround zones can be controversial. But turnaround leaders clearly must have the authority to *act*. That means a collaborative revision of many contractual requirements in districts with unions. Districts, working with turnaround partners and the state, must be able to install new principals if needed; principals must in turn have control over who is working in their buildings, along with the allocation of money, time, and programming (including curriculum and partnerships with social services). Schools must be freed to take on professional norms, including differentiated roles for teachers and differentiated compensation. Decision-making must be freed so that it revolves around the needs of children, not adults. At the same time, each turnaround school cannot be expected to design and manage its own change process; its latitude for decision-making lies within a framework of strong network support and turnaround design parameters established by the state, and carried out by districts and/or turnaround partners.

Building Capacity

Organizational turnaround in non-education-related fields requires special expertise; school turnaround is no different. It is a two-stage process that calls for fundamental transformation at the start, managed by educators with the necessary training and disposition, with steady, capacity-building improvement to follow. Neither schools and districts, nor states, nor third-party providers have sufficient capacity at present to undertake successful turnaround at scale. Building that capacity for effective turnaround – both inside of schools and among outside partners –

From Fragmented Improvement Projects to Integrated Turnaround Strategies

must be the state's responsibility, as school districts lack the means and expertise to do so on their own. Moreover: turnaround represents an opportunity to redesign the ways schools work with outside partners. The fragmentation that characterizes current school/provider relationships needs to be replaced by an integrated approach that aligns outside support around the turnaround plan, organized by a single "systems integrator" partner.

Clustering for Support

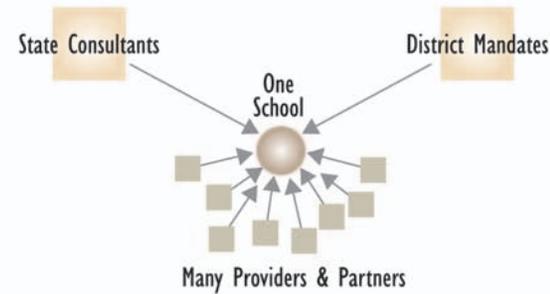
Turnaround has meaningful impact at the level of the school building, but turnaround at scale cannot be accomplished in ones and twos. States and districts should undertake turnaround in clusters organized around identified needs: by school type (e.g., middle schools or grade 6-12 academies), student characteristics (very high ELL percentages), feeder patterns (elementary to middle to high school), or region. Clusters should be small enough to operate effectively as networks, but large enough to be an enterprise – i.e., to provide valuable, efficient support from the network center.

The Political Realities: Enabling the State Role

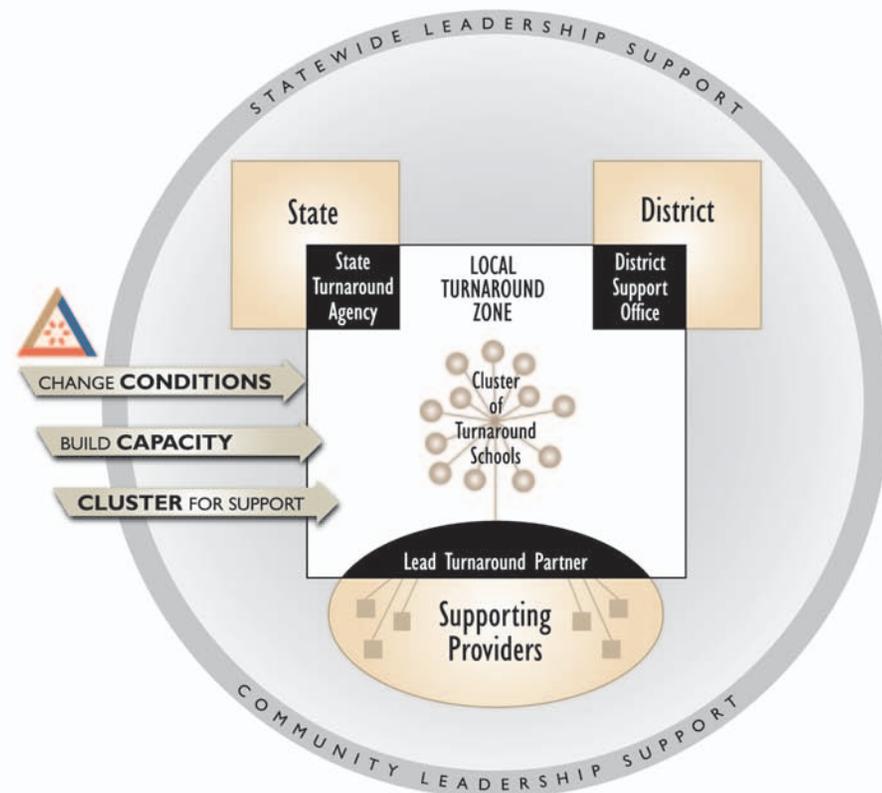
Turnaround of failing local schools has no natural constituency. Coalitions of support must instead be built at two levels – statewide and community-wide. To ensure sustained and sufficient statewide commitment to turnaround reforms and investments, *someone* (governor, commissioner, business/community leader) or some agency must create an advocacy coalition of political, education, corporate, foundation, university, and non-profit leaders. To ensure broad commitment to turnaround at the community level, states can blend the leverage of accountability-based sanctions (you risk losing authority over this school if you fail to act) with the "carrot" of resources and condition-change. Finally: to design and implement turnaround effectively, states must create an appropriate coordinating body or mechanism to lead the work, ideally as a public/private agency linked to the state department of education.

For more on the three 'C's and the state role, see Parts 3 and 4 of the full report, along with the proposed Framework in Part 5.

"Old World" Intervention Capacity & Roles



"New World" Comprehensive Turnaround Framework



About the Report

The Turnaround Challenge is part of a larger, multi-phase initiative of the Mass Insight Education & Research Institute, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The initiative is aimed at helping states, districts, schools, and partners to successfully address the issue of chronically under-performing schools – and to use failing-school turnaround as the entry point for fundamental change more broadly in public education.

The full report, supplemental report with profiles of intervention efforts in ten states and four districts, and related resources can be found at www.massinsight.org. Mass Insight is presently conducting an R&D process with selected partners (including the national consulting firm, The Parthenon Group) and states and districts (including New York City and Chicago) to assist with the implementation of the report's recommendations in the coming months and years.

The Turnaround Challenge reflects the ideas and contributions of well more than 50 organizations and individual experts, over its two-year development process. The following list only partially summarizes the breadth of these resources, and its presence here inadequately conveys Mass Insight's deep appreciation for their help.

Authors

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Dane Linn, National Governors Association
Julie Bell, National Conference of State Legislatures

12 Tough Questions

A Self-Audit for States Engaged in School Turnaround

Use this self-audit to measure the probable impact of your state's approach to school turnaround. A corollary tool for school principals charged with turnaround can be found in the full report.

Evaluating Your State's Commitment

1. Has your state visibly focused on its lowest-performing five percent of schools and set *specific, two-year turnaround goals*, such as bringing achievement at least to the current high-poverty school averages in the state?
2. Does your state have a plan in place that gives you confidence that it can deliver on these goals?
3. If not: Is there any evidence that the state is taking steps to accept its responsibility to ensure that students in the lowest-performing schools have access to the same quality of education found in high-performing, high-poverty schools?

Evaluating Your State's Strategy

4. Does your state recognize that a turnaround strategy for failing schools requires fundamental changes that are different from an incremental improvement strategy?
5. Has your state presented districts and schools with:
 - a sufficiently attractive set of turnaround services and policies, collected within a protected turnaround "zone," so that schools actively *want* to gain access to required new operating conditions, streamlined regulations, and resources; and
 - alternative consequences (such as chronically under-performing status and a change in school governance) that encourage schools and districts to volunteer?

6. Does your state provide the student information and data analysis systems schools need to assess learning and individualize teaching?
7. *Changing Conditions*: Does your state's turnaround strategy provide school-level leaders with sufficient streamlined authority over staff, schedule, budget and program to implement the turnaround plan? Does it provide for sufficient incentives in pay and working conditions to attract the best possible staff and encourage them to do their best work?
8. *Building Capacity – Internal*: Does your state recognize that turnaround success depends primarily on an effective "people strategy" that recruits, develops, and retains strong leadership teams and teachers?
9. *Building Capacity – External*: Does your state have a strategy to develop lead partner organizations with specific expertise needed to provide intensive school turnaround support?
10. *Clustering for Support*: Within the protected turnaround zones, does your state collaborate with districts to organize turnaround work into school clusters (by need, school type, region, or feeder pattern) that have a lead partner providing effective network support?

State Leadership and Funding

11. Is there a distinct and visible state entity that, like the schools in the turnaround zone, has the necessary flexibility to act, as well as the required authority, resources, and accountability to lead the turnaround effort?
12. To the extent that your state is funding the turnaround strategy, is that commitment a) adequate and b) at the school level, contingent on fulfilling requirements for participation in the turnaround zone?

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**Agreement Between the
Board of Education of
the City of Chicago and
the Chicago Teachers
Union, Local No. 1,
American Federation of
Teachers, AFL-CIO July
1, 2007 - June 30, 2012**

ARTICLE 45. COMMITTEES

45-1. The BOARD and the UNION agree to negotiate the establishment of joint BOARD-UNION study committees, the number and subject matter of such committees to grow out of needs identified through further negotiations.

All joint BOARD-UNION committees established through the provisions of this Agreement shall submit their reports to the Chief Executive Officer. After submission to the Chief Executive Officer, a copy of the committee's report shall be provided to the UNION and to the appointed committee members. The Chief Executive Officer will provide to the UNION and to each appointed committee member the Chief Executive Officer's recommendations pertaining to the committee's report before it is discharged.

45-2. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall continue to study and evaluate the TESL and bilingual-bicultural education program. Committee members shall not exceed six from the UNION and six from the BOARD.

The committee's final report shall be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement.

45-3. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be established under the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to review the clerical work required of elementary teachers and to make specific viable recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer to reduce said clerical work.

Membership on said committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-4. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall, in accordance with the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement, continue to study programs and establish standards for vocational education and school-to-career initiatives. The committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer by March 2008 for implementation July 2008.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-5. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer for alternative models for restructuring time schedules in schools. Any model approved by the Chief Executive Officer may be utilized by the principal and Local School Council, subject to the waiver procedure outlined in Appendix C of this Agreement.

Membership on this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-6. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established under the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations concerning class size, staffing and organization of Early Childhood Programs.

Membership on said committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-7. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study and recommend viable procedures for assisting school staff members in the utilization of computer resource centers and computer laboratories, monitoring, equipping and securing such centers and laboratories.

Membership of this committee shall be limited to four from the BOARD and four from the UNION.

45-8. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study and make recommendations concerning the development of career ladders for PSRPs.

Membership on this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel selected by either the BOARD or the UNION.

45-9. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established under the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to review and examine school safety and the enforcement of the Student Code of Conduct of the BOARD. The committee will report monthly to recommend methods to provide uniform enforcement of the Student Code of Conduct in elementary and high schools to reinforce and enhance the security of the Chicago Public Schools.

Membership on this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-10. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established under the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to review, discuss, plan and evaluate the year-round education program and to make recommendations concerning problems encountered in payroll, track assignments, calendars and other areas pertinent to year-round schools. Implementation of said recommendations shall be made by April 2008.

Membership on this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-11. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning issues related to career academies that shall include, but not be limited to, state-of-the-art technology, curriculum, funding, supply and equipment needs and class size/work stations.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-12. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established under the provisions of Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study the special education program. The committee shall examine inclusion, IEP, clerical work required for special education teachers and other providers, supply money, utilization of resource teachers, collaboration of regular teachers with special education teachers and other related issues.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer with a copy submitted to the UNION President by April 1, 2008.

45-13. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning issues related to tenured and probationary teacher evaluation, including a modified teacher evaluation plan, peer assistance, performance standards and change in ratings.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer with a copy submitted to the UNION President by March 15, 2008. Nothing in this section shall prevent the committee from instituting a pilot program regarding evaluation prior to the submission of its recommendations.

45-14. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning issues related to truancy.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer with a copy submitted to the UNION President by July 1, 2008.

45-15. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to consider problems encountered in schools without space available. The committee shall study, discuss and analyze the effective use of additional funds made available to the principal's discretionary fund in overcrowded schools and shall explore other approaches to reduce class size and deliver educational services in overcrowded schools.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning a resolution of this problem.

Membership on said committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel selected by either the BOARD or the UNION.

45-16. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be re-established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to fulfill the obligations under the "4.5 agreement" with respect to reviewing and examining the Employee Discipline Code.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer with a copy submitted to the UNION President by June 30, 2008.

45-17. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning expanded instructional and other educational opportunities for students through increased extended school day programs.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer and the UNION President by March 15, 2008.

45-18. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to review information technology related issues and to make specific viable recommendations on a regular basis to the Chief Executive Officer with a copy submitted to the UNION concerning information technology.

Membership on said committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

45-19. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning Case Managers.

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

This committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer and the UNION President by July 1, 2008.

45-20. A joint BOARD-UNION committee shall be established in accordance with Article 45-1 of this Agreement to study, discuss and submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer concerning jointly developed models which will facilitate the creation and expansion of BOARD "performance schools" in the city of Chicago (such as "turnaround" and "professional development" performance schools affiliated with AUSL). Under BOARD policy, performance schools are BOARD schools staffed with Chicago Public Schools teachers and PSRPs represented by the UNION. The BOARD and the UNION agree that, in developing performance school models, the task force shall consider the following matters:

- A. Recruitment, Transfer Rights and Hiring
- B. Job Protection and Reassignment Rights
- C. Evaluation
- D. Length of the School Day and Year
- E. Mentoring and Professional Development
- F. Supplemental Compensation
- G. Establishing a Target of Implementing Approximately Five Such Model Schools Each Year

Membership in this committee shall be limited to five from the BOARD and five from the UNION. It is agreed and understood that said limitations shall not preclude utilization of appropriate resource personnel.

The committee shall submit recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer and the UNION President by November 15, 2007.

APPENDIX H

REASSIGNMENT AND LAYOFF OF REGULARLY CERTIFIED AND APPOINTED TENURED TEACHERS

Section I - Scope of Policy

Whenever an attendance center or a program is closed, there is a drop in enrollment, the educational focus of the attendance center is changed such that available teaching positions cannot accommodate some or all current regularly certified and appointed teaching staff, or when an attendance center is subject to actions taken pursuant to sections 34-8.3 or 34-8.4 of the **Illinois School Code**, tenured teachers will be reassigned or laid off in accordance with this policy.

Section 2 - Selection of Tenured Teachers for Removal

A. In Attendance Centers/Programs That Are Not Subject to Reconstitution

If changes in an attendance center or program require removal of some but not all tenured teachers, tenured teachers with appropriate certifications will be selected for retention based on seniority. Provisionals, day-to-day substitutes, Cadre substitutes, temporarily assigned teachers ("TATs") and probationary teachers within the attendance center or program will be removed before any regularly certified and appointed tenured teacher with the appropriate certification is removed, in that order.

B. In Attendance Centers/Programs That Are Subject to Reconstitution

In attendance centers that are subject to reconstitution, tenured teachers will be removed in accordance with section 34-8.3 of the **Illinois School Code**. The relative weight of such criteria shall be determined by the Chief Executive Officer on an individual attendance center basis according to the School Improvement Plan and the type of position to be changed or closed.

Section 3 - Notice of Position Closing

When a determination is made that a tenured teacher's services are no longer required at an attendance center or in a program for the reasons described in Section I above, the tenured teacher will be so notified (hereinafter "notice of removal").

Section 4 - List of Vacancies

Upon notice to the tenured teacher of removal, the Department of Human Resources will immediately provide the tenured teacher with a list of all unencumbered vacant positions for which he or she is qualified. The Department of Human Resources will also provide each tenured teacher who makes a written request to the Department of

Human Resources with a copy of the list of vacancies in any area identified by the Department of Human Resources to be an area of systemic critical need.

Section 5 - Opportunity to Interview

During the first thirty school days after notice of removal, the tenured teacher will be permitted to interview at schools of his or her choosing without being assigned any additional duties. The BOARD will make available to affected tenured teachers lists of vacancies, job counseling and assistance with resume writing and interviewing skills.

Section 6 - Reassignment to Permanent Position

Applications for vacancies shall be made to the principals with a copy provided by the tenured teacher to the Department of Human Resources. The tenured teacher will be interviewed by the principal unless the position is filled before an interview takes place. When a principal recommends appointment of a tenured teacher applicant to a vacant position, the tenured teacher will be transferred to that position.

Section 7 - Interim Assignment

A. Interim Assignments for Tenured Teachers in Reassigned Teacher Pool Due to School Closings, Consolidations, Reconstitution, Drop in Enrollment and Phase Out

Effective the 2008-2009 School Year, the Department of Human Resources shall offer interim assignments in school-based, vacant 210-funded teaching positions to tenured teachers who are in the reassigned teacher pool due to school closings, consolidations, reconstitution, drop in enrollments, and phase out. Interim assignments shall be effective for a period of up to sixty consecutive school days. Offers of interim assignments shall be made in seniority order within a tenured teacher's area of certification. On October 1, 2008 and thereafter, if the reassigned teacher has not been appointed to a full-time teaching position, then the Board shall assign the teacher a 210 vacancy.

Tenured teachers who decline the assignments shall remain in the reassigned teacher pool and shall be subject to the remaining terms of this policy. The interim assignment shall be for no more than sixty consecutive school days. During the interim assignment, the school principal or a qualified administrator shall assess the tenured teacher's performance and make a determination about whether to offer the tenured teacher a regular appointment to that position when the interim assignment expires. If the tenured teacher remains in the interim position for more than sixty days, he or she shall be permanently assigned to the position. The principal decides not to retain the tenured teacher, the tenured teacher shall be reassigned to the reassigned teacher pool effective at the conclusion of the 60-day period for a term of ten school months.

The BOARD shall afford probationary appointed teachers in their fourth year of probation who are displaced in the 2007-2008 school year due to school closings,

consolidations, reconstitution, drop in enrollments, and phase out the rights and benefits of this policy.

B. Other Interim Assignments for Any Tenured Teachers in Reassigned Teacher Pool

Notwithstanding section 7(A), a principal may make an offer of an interim assignment to any tenured teacher in the reassigned teacher pool at any time with written notice to the Department of Human Resources. An interim assignment will be for no more than sixty consecutive school days during which the tenured teacher's performance will be evaluated by the principal or a qualified administrator. If the tenured teacher is removed from the interim position prior to the expiration of the interim period or if the tenured teacher is not offered a regular appointment when his or her interim appointment expires, he or she will be granted all rights to the reassigned teacher pool for ten school months. These ten months will begin after the 60 calendar school days in the interim school placement.

Section 8 - Permanent Appointment

If the principal determines during the interim period that the tenured teacher is performing satisfactorily and should be appointed permanently, the principal will recommend such an appointment to the Department of Human Resources. The recommendation will be accepted and the tenured teacher will receive a regular appointment. If the tenured teacher remains in the interim position for more than sixty days, he or she shall be permanently assigned to the position.

Section 9 - Assignment to an Area Cluster

Following the thirty-school-day period after notice of removal and thereafter during any period when the tenured teacher is not in an interim or permanent appointment, the tenured teacher will be assigned to an Area cluster as a day-to-day substitute. The Department of Human Resources will make every effort to assign the tenured teacher to the Area cluster to which the tenured teacher was previously assigned or in which the tenured teacher resides.

Section 10 - Layoff

If a tenured teacher is unable to secure a permanent appointment during the required period in the reassignment pool, the tenured teacher shall be laid off and given an honorable termination from service and the opportunity to be placed as a Cadre substitute in accordance with the AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO AND CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION, LOCAL NO. 1, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, AFL-CIO. When a layoff is required, the tenured teacher shall be notified at least fourteen days in advance of the date the layoff is to take effect. A tenured teacher who is honorably terminated and is placed as a Cadre substitute immediately following his or her honorable termination shall be afforded the opportunity to maintain his or her health benefits at the same level

and on the same terms and conditions as he or she had as a tenured teacher for a period of twelve calendar months following his or her honorable termination.

Section 11 - Recall

If after the required time in the reassigned teacher pool, the tenured teacher has not been appointed to a permanent position, he or she will be honorably terminated from service. If within two years after an honorable termination the tenured teacher is appointed by a principal to a permanent position, tenure and prior seniority will be restored to the tenured teacher as of that date.

Section 12 - Effective Date

This policy is effective only with respect to certified and appointed tenured teachers who receive a notice of removal on or after July 1, 2007.

The BOARD will approve an amended policy on the reassignment and layoff of tenured teachers to comply with this provision.

Meeting the Turnaround Challenge
School Case Study

Academy for Urban School Leadership
Harvard School of Excellence, Chicago, IL

Lead Partner Management
for Turnaround of an Existing School

Prepared by Mass Insight Education and Research Institute

May 2009



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Mass Insight Education and Research Institute is an independent 501(c) 3, nonprofit corporation

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INTRODUCTION

Turnaround Model Summary

Turnaround Approach Employed at this School:

Hybrid Lead Partner/District Management of an Existing School Turnaround

Harvard School of Excellence's turnaround process is a hybrid of an out-sourced management and a district management approach, with the district and lead turnaround partner (Chicago Public Schools and the Academy for Urban School Leadership, respectively) sharing service delivery under the direction of the partner. AUSL, as the designated operator, has been provided with all of the autonomy and flexibility needed to create its own instructional program, build its own faculty, and essentially re-launch an existing school. The district provides a range of non-instructional services (including food, transportation, payroll, and other back-office functions) that allow the partner to focus on school culture, the quality of instruction, and building connections with the community.

Harvard is part of a portfolio approach adopted by Chicago Public Schools (CPS) – one of a number of different interventions that are being applied to struggling schools in the district. CPS provided a framework and starting point for the turnaround strategies adopted by AUSL through the RFP process that was used to identify the partner, but provides fairly broad latitude to AUSL in its implementation of the turnaround plan. AUSL, for its part, fits into the tight end of the loose-tight management spectrum with its own schools, including Harvard, with an approach that features a rigorous (and expensive) leadership and teacher training program, a well-delineated curriculum, and close monitoring of school progress, especially in the first year of the turnaround process.

Why this model bears special scrutiny:

The AUSL model bears special scrutiny for the following reasons:

- CPS has managed to catalyze an unquestionably transformational reform process on a collaborative basis. Resistance that might have been expected from the teachers union – AUSL retained only three of the 21 teachers it inherited at Harvard – has been minimized because the teachers who are recruited into the school are all union members. Initial school community resistance to an external partner “takeover” has become manageable because of the bright track record of AUSL’s turnaround schools to date, because of significant outreach to parents from the school staff before the “new” Harvard even opened its doors, and because of the clearly positive changes in the school right from the beginning of AUSL’s tenure there.
- AUSL takes full advantage of its own teacher development pipeline in staffing its turnaround schools. Before taking on the responsibility for school management, AUSL was a pioneer in developing an apprentice-style urban teacher residency program. Teachers trained in AUSL’s methods who had been teaching in non-AUSL schools are now flocking to their turnaround schools – including - 14 out of the 21 teachers at Harvard. In that way, the AUSL approach amounts to the vertical integration of the mission-critical elements for turnaround; AUSL effectively controls the most important levers, going all the way back to the training of its own teacher workforce. Managers at AUSL and at the school say this may be the single most important component of the model’s success.

- AUSL and CPS have established a strong partnership with clearly defined roles, authorities, and accountabilities across a cluster of five turnaround schools, with three more to be added in summer 2009. The schools benefit from very close, deeply embedded management and oversight from AUSL; from training and other services that are provided across AUSL’s network of schools; and from back-office and logistical services from CPS, monitored by the district office that was created especially to run this portfolio of reform partnerships.
- AUSL has created a very deliberate phasing process to ensure that it creates a functioning entity in the school, not a dependent relationship with no end in sight. There is a long (for public education) preparation process that insists on the recruiting of the principal in the winter, if not the fall, of the year prior to reopening. The first year calls for intensive planning and school culture and program building in the summer and deep involvement by AUSL coaches at the school all year long. But those supports are gradually turned over to lead (“anchor”) teachers at the school beginning in year two, and by year three, the school is assumed to be able to maintain high performance levels without very significant support from headquarters.
- The district leader responsible for the development of this approach, Arne Duncan, is of course now the nation’s Secretary of Education. The announcement of Duncan’s nomination was made by then-President-Elect Obama at one of AUSL’s most successful turnaround schools. Together, Duncan and Obama have made turnaround a primary priority (and investment vehicle) of their education reform plan.

Were the two central Turnaround Keys present?:

- *Did Harvard School of Excellence (HSE) have sufficient flexibility in operating conditions?*
Yes. The Chicago Public Schools partnership agreement and control granted to AUSL over operating conditions means that HSE and all AUSL Turnaround schools have sufficient time for additional student instruction and teacher collaboration, and sufficient flexibility in terms of training, hiring, and placing staff. CPS provides AUSL, as the operating management organization, funds for ‘start-up’ to cover the first three years’ operating losses for each school. Additionally, AUSL raises its own funds for the start-up of its schools and makes all final budgetary decisions.
- *Did Harvard School of Excellence (HSE) have sufficient partner capacity and leadership?*
Yes. AUSL central office provides leadership and support for school operation, all services the AUSL schools do not get from CPS, and well-developed programs and systems for all aspects of education delivery and management (including instructor training, curriculum, instructional model, benchmark assessments, teacher evaluation, and more).

Harvard School of Excellence's Turnaround Story

Background and Context

The Chicago Public Schools (CPS) has become known nationwide in recent years for the close-and-reopen strategy behind its Renaissance 2010 initiative (which has had a goal of closing 70 schools and opening 100 to take their place). But the district's portfolio approach also has included contracting to external providers to intervene, at various levels of intensity, in its most chronically under-performing schools. In 2007, CPS created a new contracting process for selected schools scheduled for restructuring, drawing from national research such as the 2007 Mass Insight Education & Research Institute report *The Turnaround Challenge*. The CPS turnaround process is the responsibility of the CPS Office of New Schools, a newly created office that identifies qualified turnaround school operators, and conducts an extensive RFP and selection process whereby targeted school operators, such as AUSL, apply to re-launch struggling Chicago schools (see *Appendices A-D*). The district reserves this out-sourced management approach for schools that have not improved despite other forms of less intensive intervention, and characterizes this form of turnaround as "new starts" – as evidenced by the renaming of Harvard Elementary School as the Harvard School of Excellence (HSE) in the course of its re-launch. In 2008, AUSL's portfolio includes six training academies and five turnaround schools (eight elementary, three high schools).

Prior to turnaround, Harvard's Illinois State Assessment Tests (ISAT) results revealed student academic performance persistently falling well below both CPS and Illinois averages. Student behavior was described as outrageous, staff retention was low, and much instruction quality deemed to be poor. In 2007 CPS scheduled the school for turnaround, requiring a whole school transformation to serve the existing school population at all rising grades, including the integration of new academic and non-academic programs.

Harvard School has not met its AYP historically or in its first year as a re-launched turnaround school, but its 2008 turnaround outcomes are promising in mathematics. This achievement has been recognized by CPS for the mathematics performance gains in its first turnaround year. In order to raise students' reading outcomes, the curriculum is rigorous, with a focus on improving the key skills of reading comprehension and writing across the curriculum. For example, with grade 4 science results improving, the school is giving greater attention to grade 7 science next year, while maintaining the improvements in reading and math at all grade levels. (For more on student performance trends, please see Performance History section below.) The number of suspensions has also fallen dramatically in the school's first turnaround year, with numbers having fallen from a total of 75 suspensions in 2007 to 12 in 2008.

The re-launch of the school included the simultaneous induction for its first turnaround year of 14 new teachers, a new principal, and two new assistant principals. At the time that this report was written (midway through the school's second year of turnaround), staff retention remained strong and findings from staff surveys indicate that their morale is high. Parents interviewed at the school confirmed – with enthusiasm – that their initially deep skepticism about Harvard's new start under an outside operator had been replaced by deep satisfaction and a renewed community commitment to the school.

School Profile

The Harvard School of Excellence (HSE) is located in the Chicago neighborhood of Auburn-Gresham, an area with challenging socio-economic characteristics, including deprivation and high and increasing unemployment. The majority of HSE's pre-kindergarten to grade 8 student population is African American, with a small number of white and Hispanic students. The school's percentages for students with disabilities

and English learners are below CPS averages over the period 2005-2007. However, the school's 96.9% of Title I eligible students is high in comparison to the CPS average (85%).

Although there are no English language learners (ELL) identified within the current student enrollment, the school has seen a growing number of Hispanic families moving to the Auburn-Gresham neighborhood that it serves, so the school is monitoring this demographic change closely for potential increase in ELL over time. The school is located in two linked buildings, one housing kindergarten through grade 3, and the other grades 4 through 8. The school benefits from extensive refurbishments, and so provides a bright and welcoming environment for staff, students, and their families.

School & Student Overview Data

	2007-2008	2008-2009 (Most updated information before site visit)
Grades:	Pre-kindergarten - 8	Pre-kindergarten - 8
Number of students enrolled:	520	517
Age of school in its current form:	1st year	2nd year
Percentage of special education students:	5.6%	5.6%
Percentage of students that are Title 1 eligible:	88.5%	96.9%
Percentage of English Language Learners:	0	0
Suspensions:	75	12
Attendance percentage:	88%	93%
Racial/Ethnic makeup of the students (percentages):	AA/Black 99%	
	Hispanic/Latino <1%	
	White <1%	
	Asian <1%	

Performance History

Harvard School of Excellence has shown steady improvement in its ISAT test results over 2005-2008, as detailed in the tables below, although the school's scores remain significantly below the district average). While the school has not met its AYP for the period 2005-2008, the achievement gap between the school and CPS average is closing slowly. In most grades, HSE has demonstrated promising performance, especially in mathematics. Reading and science scores are also trending positively, with the school posting five and seven point gains, respectively, the first year of turnaround (*see also Appendix E, 'CPS CEO's Data Report'*).

Illinois Standards Achievement Test (standardized state testing)

*All grades composite (percentage) of students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)		Pre-Turnaround (2005)	Pre-Turnaround (2006)	Pre-Turnaround (2007)	Turnaround Year 1 (2008)
School	Reading	19%	31%	32%	36%
	Mathematics	9%	24%	34%	47%
	Science	15%	27%	26%	31%
	Composite	15%	28%	32%	40%
Chicago Public Schools (CPS)	Reading	48%	59%	61%	64%
	Mathematics	46%	64%	69%	69%
	Composite	47%	62%	64%	65%
(Annual Yearly Progress) AYP status		Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met

*Percentage of Grade 3 students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)	Pre-Turnaround (2005) Grade 3	Pre-Turnaround (2006) Grade 3	Pre-Turnaround (2007) Grade 3	Turnaround Year 1 (2008) Grade 3
Reading	9%	24%	28%	27%
Mathematics	19%	27%	40%	31%

*Percentage of Grade 4 students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)	Pre-Turnaround (2005) Grade 4	Pre-Turnaround (2006) Grade 4	Pre-Turnaround (2007) Grade 4	Turnaround Year 1 (2008) Grade 4
Reading	-	22%	20%	25%
Mathematics	-	36%	38%	46%
Science	8%	15%	19%	25%

*Percentage of Grade 5 students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)	Pre-Turnaround (2005) Grade 5	Pre-Turnaround (2006) Grade 5	Pre-Turnaround (2007) Grade 5	Turnaround Year 1 (2008) Grade 5
Reading	9%	25%	21%	28%
Mathematics	5%	10%	41%	53%

The percentage of students achieving proficient and above in the grade 3 reading has declined slight from its 2007 peak of 28% proficient and advanced levels. This is in contrast to grade 3 students' ISAT mathematics results which have increased dramatically over the school's first Turnaround year. The proportion of grade 3 students achieving proficient and above in mathematics has risen during this time from its 2005 outcomes of 19% to 31% proficiency and above in 2008.

Grade 4 has steadily sustained improvement in the ISAT science tests from 2005 to present. Grades 4 and 5 ISAT reading results have also improved slightly over time. More notable improvements have been seen in fourth and fifth graders' ISAT mathematics performance at proficient and advanced levels, with significant gains during the school's first turnaround year. In recognition of these achievements, the school received the CPS 2008 award for closing the achievement gap in mathematics.

*Percentage of Grade 6 students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)	Pre-Turnaround (2005) Grade 6	Pre-Turnaround (2006) Grade 6	Pre-Turnaround (2007) Grade 6	Turnaround Year 1 (2008) Grade 6
Reading	-	34%	39%	41%
Mathematics	-	20%	38%	48%

*Percentage of Grade 7 students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)	Pre-Turnaround (2005) Grade 7	Pre-Turnaround (2006) Grade 7	Pre-Turnaround (2007) Grade 7	Turnaround Year 1 (2008) Grade 7
Reading	-	33%	28%	55%
Mathematics	-	25%	19%	60%
Science	24%	40%	31%	39%

*Percentage of Grade 8 students achieving proficient and advanced on the state tests (ISAT)	Pre-Turnaround (2005) Grade 8	Pre-Turnaround (2006) Grade 8	Pre-Turnaround (2007) Grade 8	Turnaround Year 1 (2008) Grade 8
Reading	40%	50%	61%	46%
Mathematics	4%	27%	25%	50%

Grade 7 ISAT science test results have improved over time with the greatest gains made since turnaround. Comparably, ISAT reading results for grades 6 and 7 indicate an upward trend with significant gains in the grade 7 results in 2008, also Turnaround Year 1 for this grade. However, more notable improvements have been seen in students' ISAT mathematics performance at proficient and advanced levels in grades 6 through 8. Grade 7 students' ISAT mathematics results show the most significant gains during the school's first turnaround year. While the grade-level results vary, the 2008 the CPS recognition for closing the mathematics achievement gap covered grade levels 4 through 8.

AUSL's five-year plan for improving student achievement at HSE is ambitious. During the first two years of the school's opening, AUSL expects it to meet/exceed comparable school results on the ISAT, with the specific targets delineated in the table below. In Years 3 through 5, HSE is expected to meet or exceed the district average on the ISAT, and meet and exceed AYP. (This set of goals appears to be in line with emerging national consensus on turnaround benchmarks: meeting district averages by years 3-5, and meeting averages for similar schools by year two.)

	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3-4	Year 5
ISAT scores at <i>meet</i> or <i>exceed</i> in reading, math, and science	40%	50%	70%	80%
ISAT composite scores at <i>exceed</i> for reading, math, and science	5%	5%	15%	25%
ISAT composite scores at <i>exceed</i> for the highest grade level	5%	5%	15%	25%

STRATEGIC & OPERATING CONTEXT

Turnaround Approach

Turnaround Approach Matrix

	District Management (with supporting partners)	District & Lead Partner	Managing Partner (charter or non-charter)
Existing School		◊	
Close and Re-open			

Hybrid (lead partner/district) management model

Harvard School of Excellence’s turnaround is a hybrid of an out-sourced management and a district management approach. Chicago Public Schools and the lead turnaround partner, the Academy for Urban School Leadership, share service delivery under the direction of the partner. AUSL, as the designated operator, is provided with all of the autonomy and flexibility needed to create its own instructional program, build its own faculty, and essentially re-launch an existing school. This allows AUSL to tailor its efforts to the particular needs of the turnaround situation and the school’s historically underperforming, high poverty student population.

At the same time, the district provides a range of non-instructional services that allow the partner time to focus on school culture, quality of instruction, community connections, and the improvement of student performance. The school operator and principal are able to draw on CPS’s substantial resources for providing teacher payroll, benefit, and other human resource administration, facilities project management, purchasing, custodial/maintenance, security, and other back-office functions.

HSE and the other AUSL turnaround schools operate as CPS “Performance schools,” a program designed to allow schools to make decisions at the local level and be innovative. However, these schools must operate within the Illinois School Code and district policy. They must employ CPS teachers and staff, and are subject to the collective bargaining agreement between CPS and the Chicago Teachers Union. This arrangement encourages schools to work in a collaborative way with the union, making it easier for turnaround schools to accomplish the critical task of recruiting the entire administration and teaching staff in one season. The CPS Local School Council currently serves as the HSE’s advisory committee. However, as the school becomes established over the first three years of Turnaround, it will build its capacity to select its own membership for an advisory body.

The “qualified’ operators” contract for designated turnaround schools defines rigorous contractual requirements for re-launching and opening a turnaround school based on the following criteria:

- An elementary school turnaround, such as HSE, must involve a whole school transformation, including integration of new academic and non-academic programs;
- The school is required to serve the existing school population with all rising grades (potentially grades 1 through 8) in the first year of the turnaround process;
- The partner operator (AUSL in this case) has to meet the requirement to enroll a comparable number of incoming pre-kindergarten and/or pre-kindergarten students. This is applicable in the first and all subsequent years of the school’s re-launch.

CPS authorizes operators to decide if it is necessary to divide a school into small learning communities or develop multiple schools within a school, each of which may or may not have their own principals. AUSL chose to keep Harvard’s 500-plus student body as one learning community with one principal.

The AUSL hybrid management model is in an early stage of making an impact on turnaround in student learning. AUSL stresses, however, that in the current financial climate, the ability to draw on CPS’s significant resources in the provision of back-office services is a distinct advantage. They believe their model will demonstrate how modest-sized non-profit organizations, in partnerships with districts, can make an impact on urban schools that will raise student achievement.

“Tight” management within the AUSL organization

Under the hybrid partnership agreement CPS delegates significant authorities to AUSL. In its management of its schools, AUSL, however, fits into the tight end of the loose-tight management spectrum. It expects principals to hire a majority of their teachers from the rigorous AUSL teacher training program (though it is hard to imagine a principal considering this to be a negative), sets out well-delineated curriculum and other program elements, and closely monitors school progress, especially in the first year of the turnaround process.

HSE is governed by a binding set of standards for achieving outcomes that are expressed as part of a Board-approved Performance Plan drawn up with AUSL. The Performance Plan explains how the school will be held accountable for meeting CPS stated goals and objectives to raise student achievement, includes details of the ‘PASSAGE’ performance criteria, and spells out how the analysis of student performance and other data, such as attendance averages, will be used to measure the effectiveness of the school.

The principal of HSE, like all AUSL principals, signs a Memorandum of Understanding which articulates the governance, basic guidelines, mutual understanding and actions necessary to ensure the successful transformation of the school. AUSL guides its principals primarily by providing strong leadership, well-defined programs, structures and policies, and valuable support, and the MOU clarifies the focus and intent of the joint working relationship, support, cooperation and coordination between the HSE principal and AUSL. The MOU also establishes that the HSE principal’s decisions are, in the final event, subject to the AUSL Managing Director’s final approval.

The management organization and schools share authority in different ways, dependent on the area in question. On hiring, for instance, AUSL’s clear stipulation is that principals must select over 50% of the new Turnaround school’s teachers from the AUSL residency training program. However, AUSL give principals the final say on hiring specific individuals, and they are not required to hire any AUSL graduate who they do not

believe is a good choice for their school. Similarly, the principal makes decisions relating to the day-to-day management of the school within the AUSL guidelines for schedules, curricular programming and weekly staff professional development meeting. For example, the allocated time scheduled for the Open Court program is determined by AUSL, but the related format for teachers' professional development in strategies for implementation is at the discretion of the principal, informed by the expertise of his instructional staff. While AUSL maintains control of the adoption of primary textbooks and instructional programs, the selection and purchase of enhancement resources are decided by the school leadership in consultation with staff.

Conditions

As contractually agreed with CPS, AUSL has operating control and authority over its Turnaround schools. While all HSE staff are CPS-contracted employees with general CPS terms and conditions of employment, AUSL exercises control in terms of: training, hiring, placing, motivating and managing central and school staff; how the school allocates time for additional student instruction and teacher collaboration; budgetary decisions that allow operating funds to underpin the AUSL model; the raising of additional resources to cover the initial costs of taking over each school; and the school's educational program that enables the work of the school to be tailored to its high-need population.

People

As employees of CPS and members of the Chicago Teachers' Union (CTU), faculty and staff are covered by CPS collective bargaining agreements. If HSE or AUSL wish to modify aspects of the teaching position, including hours worked, they must apply for waivers from the CTU. AUSL has gained agreement, for instance, for the payment of stipends to "Lead Teachers" for extra duties involving leading grade level meetings, reviewing grade level data and participating in curriculum projects. All AUSL turnaround teachers also receive additional compensation for extra instructional and professional development hours worked.

The AUSL turnaround school model also acknowledges the need for extra, specialized staff to address the transformation process. For a 500-600 student school, the principal gets two assistant principals in the first year, a curriculum coach, three induction/mentoring coaches, Lead Teachers, a clerk assistant, a second security officer 4-6 teaching assistants, a full-time social worker, and a dean of students. (For funding of these positions, see the Money section, below.) AUSL also gives each newly appointed Turnaround school principal a leadership coach from its small pool of experienced educators, to provide ongoing professional development and support. In addition, other senior and experienced AUSL staff support the principal's school planning activities.

One of AUSL's greatest "people" strengths is the teacher pipeline from its highly regarded Urban Teacher Residency, which provides the majority of its school staff. For a full analysis of the residency program as a recruiting pipeline, please see the Capacity section below.

Time

AUSL has control over its use of time, and also has leeway – to the extent that private funds allow – to add time to address the challenge of turnaround. It incorporated extra time for teachers from the start of its model, and is now beginning to include additional instructional time for students.

One of the top priorities in the AUSL model is to provide time for adults, both teachers and administrators, to address tasks most directly associated with improving student learning.

Teachers are supported by CPS, AUSL central staff, and school leadership in numerous ways that increase the time they have to plan, collaborate with other educators and develop their skills. HSE has four common planning periods at grade level and one grade level cluster meeting built into the teachers' weekly schedules throughout the school year. The HSE principal and lead teachers direct one 60-minute after school professional development (PD) session per week for all staff members, to promote a whole school professional learning community (PLC). Meetings include discussions of student performance data and instructional strategies, with time set aside to check curriculum pacing and alignment to the state standards. AUSL curriculum coaches work collaboratively with teachers to support their analysis and use of data to inform their lesson planning and intervention strategies. In addition, there are four CPS teacher institute days, three teacher PD days, and four staff development days for school improvement planning during the school year (*see Appendix F for an example of a professional development schedule*).

School leaders are also provided with extra time in the AUSL model. AUSL central office, for instance, manages all operational components for staff hiring, training, resource allocation and support so their school principals have time to focus on implementing instructional strategies and monitoring the school's academic program.

While the creation of time during the school day and year for educators to plan and develop collaboratively is becoming increasingly common, AUSL also provides extra time for something still much more rare – significant planning and preparation for the launch of a turnaround school in the summer prior to re-opening. HSE leaders, teachers and coaches all attended a *full-time five-week* summer PD program prior to launch, partly within their own school, partly with staff of existing AUSL schools for PD on common AUSL programs and tools. Harvard faculty and staff were also provided with time in the summer prior to re-opening to meet parents and students and 'walk the neighborhood' to dispel misconceptions about the transformation of the school. For more on the pre-launch program, see the Change Management section.

Summer planning time is also provided for school leaders every summer, through a three-day strategic planning conference involving all AUSL principals, assistant principals, coaches, and AUSL central program staff. For more on this cross-school planning session, see the section on clustering, below.

While AUSL focused first on adequate time for educator development and planning, they quickly identified the need for increasing time for student learning as well. In 2009, HSE will extend the school day by one hour, three days per week, or 104 hours per year. Attendance during this extended day will not be optional. Over the course of the 104 hours, students will extend the learning that takes place during the school day. They will study through core curriculum projects, in which content will be taught in a multitude of ways, with teachers helping students to review, practice, and apply content and skills to new contexts. The atmosphere will be more relaxed than in regular class sessions, with a focus on discussion, designed to enhance students' self-discipline and responsibility for study.

Money

Harvard has significant additional funds for school transformation, both for the initiation of turnaround and for the first few years of operation. These are provided by both CPS and AUSL. In their role as lead partner AUSL has significant discretion on how the CPS per-pupil and turnaround premium funds are allocated within each school, and of course, complete control over how they spend the additional funds they contribute themselves. AUSL principals have control over their building budgets in terms of decisions on most staffing positions. But AUSL maintains authority to monitor the school's funding resources to avoid conflict of interest and to ensure the appropriate use of state and federal funds to support the school's development.

The initial funding provided by CPS includes:

- Facilities “start-up” funds, to improve physical plant
- The designated CPS “turnaround” premium for all of its designated turnaround schools, which funds:
 - A one-time sum of \$300,000 to set up the new school team. This allows AUSL to hire the principal and two to three key staff members in the January prior to the turnaround school opening, as well as pay for the 5-week professional development conducted in the summer before opening. (for more on the planning year, see the Change Management section below.)
 - The funding of an assistant principal in Year 1. This position is funded by CPS only for the first year, but AUSL continues to fund the position in years two and three from the per pupil premium or private grants.
 - The premium also includes an extra \$420 per pupil, amount for the first five years. (See more about this under operating budget funding below.)

AUSL notes that none of the CPS turnaround premium is used to pay for AUSL’s administrative operations, or even the central office team that develops curriculum, assessment, etc. All of these costs are funded by private grants. The initial funding provided by AUSL includes:

- Special capital improvements. In individual cases, AUSL will raise additional funds for capital projects it feels are necessary that fall outside the scope of the CPS facilities start-up funding. AUSL determines the need for additional expenditure based on the importance of sending a message of change to the students and school community and of requirements for improving student outcomes.
- (Also, of course all the heavy central-office involvement in each turnaround initiation.)

For an operating budget CPS provides:

- An annual operating budget for the basic operation of the school, which includes the state and federal entitlements for high-poverty schools, IDEA funding, etc. CPS turnaround schools are funded under a “per pupil” method, but principals have significant discretion over the expenditure of the funds in ways they deem critical to turnaround.
- An extra \$420 per pupil per year for the first five years from the CPS Office for New Schools turnaround premium, mentioned above. This gives the school a useful buffer to ensure it can provide the resources it needs to cover running costs involving curriculum development, instructional supports and a school culture that is conducive to learning. AUSL schools use this money for extended day salaries and PD, as well as community events to engage parents and local community members in the turnaround effort

AUSL provides:

- Additional programs and services funded by grants and fund-raising. AUSL believes that successful turnaround requires even more investment than provided by all of the above, and so pursues an aggressive development plan to raise private funds in the region of \$75,000 for each elementary school to fund things like sports and arts programs, incentives for principals and lead teachers, and extra curriculum coaches. AUSL notes that these amounts do not include the significant additional funds AUSL raises to operate the Urban Teacher Residency program (over \$3 million in 2008-9), which

creates the pipeline of teachers to staff new turnarounds (HSE hired 14 such residency grads in its first year).

- AUSL central office also invests in the on-going coaching, updating of curriculum and other program elements, etc.

Program

As lead partner, AUSL can stipulate the curriculum and instructional program used by its schools to promote student achievement and progress on the Illinois state assessments and NCLB. The curriculum is based on the state subject standards and a program focused on students' achievement of 'proficiency or above,' or 75% mastery of the well-defined reading and math curriculum. AUSL provides frameworks for rigorous pacing and sequencing to guide teachers' planning and implementation.

HSE and its other schools implement a benchmark assessment system, known as CDAS, or Classroom Diagnostic Assessment Systems, that provides timely feedback on specific knowledge and skills for specific students. Student performance data is collated and analyzed in a six-weekly cycle to establish specific, challenging achievement goals for the school as a whole and for individual students. In turn, student performance data informs school wide and individual student goals for future actions through the school improvement plan (*see Appendix G*). For more detail on this system, see the Personalized Instruction section, below. HSE is developing its master schedule to further balance the core curriculum with history, art, music or physical education and technology as part of the extended day. The HSE Staff Handbook outlines the specific components of the school's literacy instruction, mathematics modules, and science programs. (For more on the curriculum and academic programs, see the Readiness to Teach section below, and the Staff Handbook, Appendix H.)

AUSL schools conduct an in-depth assessment of every student's knowledge at the beginning of every year, and track specific needs throughout the year through the CDAS short-feedback loop formative assessment system. The school then addresses the identified needs through interventions such as small-group differentiated instruction or individual tutoring with the curriculum coaches, key skills study programs, and, starting next year, use of the additional instructional time provided in the three mandatory extended days. Very few of the 5.6% of students identified with special needs require additional services made available through CPS. Most special education students have their needs met in the classroom with their peers. Additional "push in" and "pull out" support is provided for those students the school recognizes as needing more specialized academic intervention.

AUSL also provides a range of social-emotional supports to help counter the adversity and turbulence prevalent in the lives of their students. These range from well-developed school culture, safety and discipline initiatives to the engagement of parents and collaboration with community-based organizations such as churches and specialized urban programs. Each school has a fulltime social worker who provides families with relevant information and can help link them to health and social organizations relevant to their needs. Additional counseling services support children at risk for social, emotional and behavioral concerns. However, many students and families need community-based services that the school cannot provide, so they also rely on external agencies and CPS for additional services. For more on academic and social/emotional support, see the Readiness to Learn section, below.

Capacity

AUSL is perhaps uniquely positioned to address both of the capacity needs that have proven to be fundamental to school turnaround: external capacity from a partner with turnaround expertise and resources, and internal capacity in the form of school leaders and teachers with the skills and experience to deal with the particular challenges of high-challenge urban populations. In fact, the organization offers both a pipeline of teachers through its Urban Teacher Residency, and, since 2006, an active school management organization that partners with CPS in the transformation of the kind of underperforming schools where the graduates of their teacher residency teach.

External Capacity - Academy for Urban School Leadership

AUSL first partnered with CPS in 2006 to turn around Sherman Elementary, Chicago's first Turnaround school. Following its success, AUSL extended its partnership with CPS and undertook the turnarounds of Harvard (2007-08) and two additional elementary schools, and of Chicago's first high school turnaround school. AUSL's portfolio also includes the six newly started schools (four elementary schools and two high schools) which act as "training academies" for the Urban Teacher Residency program. All of the schools that AUSL has started or successfully turned around remain under AUSL management.

Following a strategic decision in 2007 to expand in the turnaround space, and using funds provided by foundations and individual donors, AUSL increased the size and capability of its central organization from 14 FTEs (2005-06) to 48 FTEs (2008-09). This sizeable operation is privately funded to support HSE and other AUSL Turnaround schools through a strong support staff in the AUSL central organization, including: a full-time senior leadership team; full-time functional specialists in curriculum (both elementary and high school), coaching, curricular enhancements, knowledge management and community outreach; and a Managing Director of Finance and Administration, supported by full-time specialists in development, HR/Recruiting, Finance, and IT. The AUSL organizational structure also provides for succession planning.

The AUSL central capacity provides the individual schools and leaders with strong overall school model and curricular, assessment and social/emotional programs, all based on the latest research as well as years of working knowledge of urban education acquired through running its teacher residency program. The lead partner also provides outstanding teacher recruitment and preparation through that residency program (see next section), as well as extra staff (coaches, assistant principals, etc.) inserted at the school level.

Internal capacity –School leadership and teacher capacity

While other turnaround players may provide central office capacity similar to that offered by AUSL, only AUSL combines this with an integrated pipeline for teacher and school leader capacity specially trained to tackle the challenges of student populations like those found in turnaround schools. Since 2001, AUSL has operated one of only three not-for-profit Urban Teacher Residency programs in the country. Its program design consists of a full-year campus-based residency in a CPS classroom that includes training, education, certification, and mentorship. The statistics at the end of the first six years of the residency program are impressive. They have provided over 240 new teachers, who serve more than 6,000 low-income Chicago Public School children, and have maintained a 90% retention rate for AUSL program graduates in CPS.

Teacher capacity

By the time AUSL became engaged in the turnaround of underperforming schools, it was operating six new-start training academies. These AUSL training academies are a key enabler of AUSL's success in launching

turnaround schools, because they produce each year a group of new teachers who are specially selected, trained and contractually committed for four years to serve in Turnaround schools. The AUSL residency has indeed proved to be an effective pipeline of high quality teacher trainees for Harvard; two-thirds of the current Harvard faculty were AUSL residents.

And the pipeline is growing, with 68 residents being trained in the Class of 2009, up from 52 graduates in the Class of 2008. Because several of the training academies are located in high poverty neighborhoods with student populations over 90% low-income, teachers-in-residence receive valuable, first-hand experience of working in urban schools very similar to turnaround schools. Beginning in 2007-08 residents were also able to spend time observing in AUSL turnaround schools.

AUSL has set a goal for all of their new turnaround schools (already exceeded at Harvard) that over half of the teachers will be Urban Teacher Residency graduates. 41 new elementary residents and 27 new high school residents will staff the 2009-10 new Turnaround schools. These individuals have been specifically selected and trained over a full year to become “turnaround-ready.”

To complement the training of these high quality new teachers, newly appointed AUSL turnaround principals, with the support of AUSL’s central recruiting systems and staff, recruit and hire other experienced classroom teachers, resource teachers and other staff. In 2008-9 AUSL received over 7 applications for every available position, helped no doubt by the fact that applicants know they are joining a cohort of well-trained and committed urban educators. The recruiting process includes interactive role-playing, written reflection, and time spent with an existing turnaround teacher.

School leadership capacity

Each AUSL turnaround school has significant leadership capacity within its building, with a leadership team including the principal, two assistant principals, a dean of students and a full-time social worker, in addition to anchor teacher stipend positions and AUSL coaches. All these leaders benefit from extensive support from AUSL central office.

All AUSL principals must meet all CPS requirements for the role. AUSL proactively accesses multiple sources for high-quality school leadership candidates. New Leaders for New Schools, LAUNCH and other alternative leadership programs provide lists of recommended graduates from their programs who are on the approved CPS principal list. The HSE principal was a New Leaders for New School Resident, as well as an AUSL residency graduate. In addition, AUSL has worked with the Office of New Schools, Chicago Public Education Fund, Public Impact and the CPS Chief Education Officer to pilot interview tools for selecting excellent turnaround principals.

As the AUSL organization matures, it has also become its own pipeline for principal talent in two ways. The first is the teacher residency program, where one of the selection criteria is whether candidates have potential to become a school leader some day. As the teacher residency graduates complete the program and progress in their careers, many enter the pipeline for leadership positions. Even without this specialized training, however, field experience in the school allows other AUSL school staff (who did not come from the residency program) to ascend to new administrative posts. Of the three principals hired for 08-09, two came from the ranks of AUSL assistant principals (the third was in a literacy position with CPS central office).

In addition, AUSL prepared the new HSE Turnaround principal for leading the re-launch through participation in a one-year principal preparation program, New Leaders for New Schools. This program includes coached support to guide the school leadership in these areas:

- Development of the school’s vision, mission and culture/climate
- Conducting a safe and orderly environment
- Creating engaging and exciting learning atmosphere
- Recruitment, collaboration, staff professional development, and teambuilding
- Shared and data driven decision making
- Parent and community involvement
- Code of conduct
- Understanding the social and emotional development of students
- Improving academic achievement
- Developing an effective professional learning community

The HSE principal’s AUSL leadership training assisted his ‘readiness’ to implement turnaround strategies and best educational practice based on research. The focus on instructional leadership provided the foundations for him to effectively lead and sustain transformations. Additionally, the principal received AUSL guidance for communicating clearly and dealing with conflict. The HSE principal is monitored through AUSL review of his demonstrated knowledge of the CPS Principal Competencies and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium’s standards on effective school leadership.

Clustering

AUSL runs five turnaround schools, four elementaries (including Harvard) and one high school, so it is in the early stage of clustering. While the organization states that it “stands ready to launch and operate whichever schools are identified by CPS” as requiring turnaround, it expresses a preference for addressing students’ needs in elementary school and a belief in the theory that clustering the turnaround schools so that turnaround elementaries feed into turnaround high schools.

As described in the Turnaround Approach section, AUSL’s fairly “tight” management model stems from the centrally-designed systems, procedures and curricula used by its schools, as well as the exceptionally strongly shared culture, norms and techniques resulting from the high percentage of turnaround school staff who have been through the AUSL Urban Teacher Residency program.

Clearly, however, the balance between a common approach and individual school and principal autonomy is still something that the AUSL central leadership pays attention to. AUSL’s Managing Directors state that they “believe that there are opportunities for greater standardization across AUSL’s network of schools, but we appreciate the complexities and we are advancing carefully, thoughtfully, and in a highly personalized way with each of our school teams.” (See *completed elementary RFP, Appendix C.*) Thus the management style across the cluster is somewhat differentiated, with the degree of loose or tight oversight partly determined by the strength of the leadership team and the school’s overall progress.

Quality monitoring

As part of the “tight” management structure described in the Turnaround approach section, there is significant quality monitoring of school outcomes by AUSL. A “Data Dashboard” is updated weekly, tracking performance data, attendance, demerits, and suspensions. The dashboard gives AUSL officers and the principal an opportunity to discuss trends within the school’s data and to make comparisons with the other AUSL network of schools. Targets are set against these findings to rectify adverse patterns in student performance and attendance, and any rise in the suspension rates. Logs of external support, supplementary instruction, assessment outcome, special education and school culture are also monitored by AUSL.

Learning across the cluster

Already its small cluster of five turnarounds engages in a significant amount of collaborative work around the centrally-developed programs and supports. AUSL provides a number of forums to assemble staff across the different schools. Its calendar of planned events includes a three-day strategic planning session for school leadership teams each summer, monthly meetings of all same-level principals (e.g. principals of elementary schools), quarterly meetings of all principals, and quarterly gatherings for alumni of AUSL’s residency program (a significant portion of the teaching staff at the turnaround schools). The five-week summer PD institute for newly opening turnaround schools is also used to gather all staff from the other schools for PD on common AUSL curriculum and programs. During this gathering, leadership teams meet together and in school-specific subgroups to review the school improvement, undertake data analysis and set targets based on test scores, student and teacher attendance, and survey results. The principals reflected on and discuss these in school and cross-network teams to define specific targets for progress over the next five years, and to discuss how they can be met. Best practices are also transmitted through the Leadership Coaches, who work closely with all principals.

Learning across the cluster has already proven valuable at Harvard, where the principal listened to Sherman Elementary’s advice that departmentalizing in earlier grades (grades 3-6) should not be attempted in the first year of turnaround. The Sherman leadership was able to share their experience that it was more important to focus on culture change in the initial year, and then move more gradually toward departmentalization when the new culture had taken hold.

TURNAROUND IMPLEMENTATION

Change Management/Turnaround Process

The transformation of Harvard School of Excellence was typical of the AUSL turnaround experience: the turnaround leadership was able to introduce a rapid change in culture and delivery that spoke volumes about turnaround intentions. This experience presupposed the key elements of the AUSL turnaround model detailed in the Turnaround Model and Capacity sections above:

- strong central office guidance and support for curricular, instructional, and socio-emotional programs and human resource processes;
- the existence of a specialized pipeline of “turnaround ready” leadership and staff;
- the reliance on operational services from Chicago Public Schools.

Because all these pieces were designed and put in place up front, they could be drawn upon to produce effective, dramatic change in a defined turnaround time.

Yet, perhaps the most important keys to actually managing the change from a chronically underperforming school to successful turnaround launch were those up-front activities that require advanced planning and execution but that AUSL treats as non-negotiable in undertaking turnaround:

- “Year 0” time to plan and recruit (see more on this immediately below)
- Long pre-launch summer institute (as described in the Clustering section)
- “Shock and awe” changes to physical plant (as described in the Money section)

AUSL and HSE staff used the nine months prior to turnaround in a highly intentional way. The school had to re-establish relationships with parents and community over the course of a few short months, to ensure that the school re-opened on solid foundations. This entailed:

Engaging and listening to the community

From the onslaught of announcements that AUSL was approved to turn around the school, the central staff moved into action with CPS to appoint from the AUSL pool of principals-in-residence, a new administrator who initiated his role by engaging with the community. It was necessary to reach out to parents, community leaders, elected officials, local clergymen and the school’s direct neighbors by meeting them personally to listen, learn and collaborate to ensure their support and to dispel any misconceptions of the changes to take place. Later, the five week summer turnaround institute included ‘walking the neighborhood’ to dispel misconceptions about the changes taking place at HSE. Every teacher met with parents of the children already in the school to personalize communication and to respond to their worries about their children settling with the new staff. New intake parents and their children were offered open days to visit the school and to meet the principal and staff. There were community meetings held and led by AUSL central staff and the HSE principal to explain the Turnaround process, role of AUSL and to meet the principal. Faculty and staff also attended these pre-Turnaround meetings so that they would be familiar with parents and the community. (For more on initial community interactions, see the Agility in the Face of Turbulence section below.)

Hiring and coaching outstanding school leaders

AUSL used private and CPS “turnaround premium” funding to hire the principal designate and two to three key staff in the January prior to the new Turnaround school opening. This gave time for the team to implement the start-up plan. The team quickly built professional relationships with the wider AUSL staff team because members worked in another school building for some or all of this time, until offices became available in the new school. The team’s key charges were to build relationships with the community, to set up curriculum, and to initiate the school’s culture. The newly appointed principal embraced his role as an AUSL Turnaround school principal. He describes his appointment as a challenge, but expressed that he had been well prepared through his in-residence training and prior experience in the AUSL network as an assistant principal. During the planning period, AUSL gave the principal considerable support from its most experienced coaches and senior central staff.

Recruiting an entire school staff, all at once

The new principal found the selection and appointment of the school’s faculty and staff one of the biggest challenges he faced in opening the school, despite the fact that they had an excellent supply of high quality teachers trained to serve the needs of the high poverty student populations of HSE. (Beginning in 2007-08,

AUSL specifically redefined its training program to ensure it prepared new teachers specifically for its own Turnaround schools. All of these teachers have Master's degrees, and are contractually committed to stay for at least four years (subject to satisfactory performance). In addition to those teachers selected from the AUSL pool, there were four teachers who had previously been in the pre-turnaround setting who were retained following their application and interviews, which included observations of their lessons.

Partnering with CPS

During the HSE re-launch phase, AUSL worked specifically through the Office for New Schools. The Office for New Schools is responsible for the Turnaround process and for ensuring that various CPS departments work closely with AUSL to coordinate recruiting, staffing, physical plant upgrades and financial matters. AUSL has strategically appointed experienced central office staff equipped with the knowledge, relationships and insight into district systems and processes that enabled it to collaborate effectively with CPS.

The HSE principal, reflecting on the first months of the turnaround, emphasized the importance of good communication between CPS, AUSL and the re-launch school as a factor in the success of the enterprise. Through explicit and transparent face-to-face communication, AUSL was able to illustrate not only to CPS, but to the school and its wider community, the organization's capacity for making improvements through targeted resources, training processes, and strategic planning.

Implementation Summary

AUSL schools like HSE are provided by the organization with specialized turnaround school curriculum and instructional systems, teacher and student supports and management approaches, all clearly defined around Dr. Robert Marzano's work on behavior, responsibility and community and parental involvement, and Insight Education's Readiness triangle. Full details of AUSL's programs, services and management approaches can be found in the AUSL artifact documents, from which the following highlights on how the schools address readiness to teach, learn, and act are drawn.

Readiness to Teach

The entire AUSL approach is built on the central role of educators as professionals with highly-developed readiness to teach in turnaround situations. Key ingredients to the success of this role include the urban residency program which prepares many of the teachers, the design of school programs such as assessments and instructional strategies that help those teachers work effectively, and a culture that fosters a sense of shared accountability for performance and achievement within the schools and central office.

Personalization of Instruction

The AUSL instructional model is based on research and experience showing that in high-poverty, underperforming schools, a large share of students need personalized, focused instruction to help them overcome gaps in their learning.

At the beginning of the school year, HSE teachers use a combination of assessments to assess all students in literacy and math. The principal stressed that it was important to assess all students, not just students with prior test results below grade level, in depth at the beginning of the year, to ensure that teachers have sufficient

information about all students to take action promptly for remediation and acceleration. AUSL, with support from external research and consultants, has developed a K-8 standards-based curriculum and assessment system (referred to as CDAS, or Classroom Diagnostic Assessment Systems) for math, science and reading. For grades 3-4 these systems consist of a) Illinois benchmarks that have been “unpacked” to reveal the embedded knowledge, skills, concepts and reasoning, b) short formative assessments aligned to the benchmarks and c) pacing guides or assessment matrices that correlate curriculum materials with the benchmarks and assessments. For writing, AUSL have also identified the implied knowledge, skills and reasoning in the writing benchmarks; created a scoring rubric based on Six Traits of Writing and the CPS writing rubric, with student exemplars; and written quarterly assessment prompts, with student exemplars.

For kindergarten through second grade, developmental reading assessments (DRA) and the *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills* (DIBELS) are used to measure reading achievement and progress. In math for these levels, teachers do their own assessments at the end of each unit to keep track of progress. The school currently has less formal formative and summative assessments in science and social studies at the lower or higher levels, although student work is calibrated and analyzed across these areas of the curriculum to raise students’ key skills and achievement in reading and math.

Throughout the school year, the CDAS, unit tests and standards-based benchmark assessments determine up-to-date individual reading levels and math proficiency. Using the analyzed data, teachers pull children into small groups or individual conferences to address gaps. Knowledge and skills are developed through a wide variety of instructional methods. In reading, for instance, the school uses leveled books for instruction, students are exposed to a wide variety of authentic literature in their independent reading time, and they are learning to engage in discussions about literature. A strategy that works at Harvard is ‘Turn and Talk,’ where students are asked to discuss with partners something that interests them about their reading. Every student in grades 3 through 8 has a reader’s notebook and in grades kindergarten through 2, students are learning the intricate connection between reading and writing.

The emphasis on literacy development extends beyond the classroom curriculum. HSE is a Real Men Read school, with visiting African American males from an array of professional backgrounds reading to students on a monthly basis. HSE also has an after school book club which has scheduled family literacy nights planned for early 2009.

Professional Teaching Culture

AUSL believes in ensuring that the adults in the turnaround context are as skilled and experienced as possible in managing and delivering instruction tailored to their students, and then arranging structures, programs, and policies so they can apply these skills with minimal barriers or distractions. Schools like HSE provide a professional teaching culture uniquely designed to utilize the skills of turnaround-ready educators.

Recruitment and Turnaround Training

The AUSL Urban Teacher Residency and its relationship to the AUSL turnaround schools like HSE have been described in detail in the Internal Capacity section above. This recruiting pipeline is essential to the teaching culture at HSE. Teachers coming out of the residency are trained to use high quality instructional strategies, and have had the opportunity to work with colleagues in using the AUSL academic programs in real instructional time prior to taking up their positions in the Turnaround school.

Turnaround Summer Institute and Ongoing PD

AUSL places as much emphasis on professional development for its staff as it does to hiring quality educators in the first place. As mentioned above, during five weeks beginning in mid-July prior to the opening of a new turnaround school, AUSL provides full-time PD for teachers and leaders of all new Turnaround elementary schools. Teachers receive information and work collaboratively to plan as a school and in grade level teams. The program is broad, interactive, and collaborative, and includes multiple outside expert presenters including individuals with experience from prior turnarounds. It builds the teachers, coaches and administrators into a cohesive team, and engages them with the community. Teachers develop and align themselves around a school vision statement, discuss strategies for addressing discipline and social-emotional challenges they can expect from their high poverty students and learn about AUSL's curriculum, data-driven instruction tools and other basics.

On an on-going basis, teachers benefit from an hour after school every Thursday of paid time to take part in professional development. AUSL's web-based student management system (Linkit!) includes a bank of teaching materials to support teachers' planning. In addition, coaches are readily available at this time to support teachers individually and at grade level to help them plan effective instructional strategies. AUSL also supports the many teachers who undertake professional development activities on their own time, including work to prepare their portfolios for National Board Certification.

Teacher Leaders

Each of the AUSL turnaround elementary schools has "Lead Teachers," one for every two grade levels and staffed by regular CPS teachers. Additional compensation from AUSL of \$5000 per year for the first three years of the turnaround is given to each individual in recognition of the importance of this role and the extra duties and responsibilities involved. Lead teachers are expected to lead grade level meetings to ensure teachers accurately review achievement data and plan differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students. In addition, they play a pivotal role in curriculum projects for the turnaround school and other AUSL network schools. During the second year of the turnaround, it is the Lead Teachers who begin to take over many of the roles that were being played by AUSL coaches in the first year.

Induction and Curriculum Coaches

AUSL uses part of its turnaround school per pupil premium to hire full-time induction and curriculum coaches for at least the first two years of each turnaround school's life. All experienced classroom teachers, they help colleagues with classroom management, establishing school culture and climate, and ensuring instruction meets the needs of all students to enable the achievement gap to be closed quickly. Details of both types of coach's specific duties are included in artifact x (AUSL's executive summary and portfolio document).

Shared Responsibility for Achievement

All members of the HSE faculty and staff are expected to embrace a shared responsibility for student achievement, and to ensure that this informs the day-to-day decisions and actions of every adult in the school. The expectations for achievement have been developed in collaboration with AUSL staff across the organization, and they are addressed using many network-wide tools and policies, programs and systems implemented within each AUSL school.

The responsibilities for providing instructional leadership and effective monitoring of teaching and learning lie with the principal. One of the major tools for measuring and directing learning is the Classroom Diagnostic Assessment system described in the Personalized Instruction section above. The Harvard teachers are committed to and feel accountable for tracking their students' progress. The principal models this

responsibility by monitoring and checking with individual teachers the progress made by students in grades 3 through 8 on the benchmark assessments delivered every six weeks. Similarly, the principal meets with teachers to discuss the outcome of the DRA and DIBELS diagnostic and formative tests in kindergarten through grade 2. This attention is aimed at supporting action; he ensures that there is ample time for re-teaching, and that teachers follow plans through to implementation. Teachers' lesson planning time and weekly professional development are protected to ensure their readiness for teaching. The principal actively engages alongside lead teachers, and carries out "walk throughs" to implement evaluative monitoring processes and to ensure consistency and implementation of AUSL instructional strategies. HSE also meets all requirements for addressing special education IEPs.

Readiness to Learn

Action Against Adversity

All members of the HSE faculty and staff are committed to taking steps to address directly the challenges posed by the turbulence and poverty that play a significant role in their students' lives. Their Education Plan and programs are explicitly designed around research about what works best in high-poverty urban schools, along with the organization's own experiences in the urban education field over the past eight years. Indeed the AUSL Education Plan, summarized under the acronym PASSAGE, includes "Action Against Adversity" as the second of its six key elements, focusing particularly on:

- Schools directly addressing poverty-driven deficits
- Leaders adept at securing additional resources and leveraging partner relationships to address these challenges
- Establishment of vehicles for communication between schools, parent and the community
- Establishment of governance that involves parents/community

The school is supported by AUSL to coordinate with public services such as Medicaid, employment services and emergency housing assistance; to pursue links, especially for the homeless population, to other social services (e.g. housing shelters, runaway centers, domestic violence centers); to provide school uniform subsidies; and to work with the CPS transportation department to coordinate transportation support. HSE has also established partnerships with the churches and local charities that assist families in need of support and resources. This being said, AUSL has not to date followed the lead of some other inner city school in incorporating health centers into their buildings, or requiring all faculty to have training in human services.

The schools address the poverty-driven deficits in their instructional program through the use of frequent assessment and tailoring of instruction in small groups to address gaps in learning (see Personalization of Instruction, above), and in their school culture, discipline and safety approach through an emphasis on a code of conduct, self-discipline and good learning habits (see these sections immediately below). The school's extensive interaction with parents and community groups aims in part to extend support for their students beyond the school building, as well as to bring their families into it, to better dismantle barriers.

There is a genuine open door policy at HSE, with reasonable direct access for parents to the principal and assistant principals. Home-school communication, through telephone and e-mail systems, is showing promising results, with parental involvement increasing in classrooms, at workshops/information meetings, and at school events. Some vetted neighborhood and parent volunteers listen to children read; others walk

children to/from school daily to ensure their safety and good attendance (Harvard calls this the “walking school bus”). Teachers report individual student progress to parents bi-monthly, accompanied by invitations to meet on any issues. The principal holds monthly parent liaison meetings to update and inform parents of the school’s progress against AUSL and CPS goals. Data is shared and discussed to help parents better understand the state standards and the benchmark assessment outcomes. There have been explicit and culturally diverse celebrations to value the school’s growing ‘melting pot’ of ethnic groups. Translators are available in school to support non-English speakers. Meetings are held in English and Spanish with the most home/school information translated. (See also Agility in the Face of Turbulence, below, for more on community connections).

The school follows the CPS procedural manuals for educating students with specialized needs. Consequently, there is a designated special education case manager, counselor, full-time social worker and specialized and general education teachers who conduct evaluations, design goals and objectives, manage student files and revise individual education plans while ensuring the delivery of services in line with CPS requirements. AUSL addresses the issue of involving parents and community through another CPS requirement – the Advisory Local School Council. For more on this, see Safety, Discipline and Engagement.

Close Student-Adult Relationships

AUSL’s model does not focus on extensive one-on-one student-teacher interaction. Regular class sizes are approximately 28-30. However, most students are also involved in small group classes or tutorials as well, which provides more of an opportunity for adult-student relationships to develop. The counselor and other specialized personnel are also likely to work closely with some students. There is no defined mechanism such as advisories for each student to develop a deeper relationship with a staff member. However, the AUL school culture provides for extensive contact of students as a group with adults, and this extends outside of the school building to communication with parents and the neighborhood.

Safety, Discipline & Engagement

There are clear procedures for ensuring safety for everyone in the HSE building, both for adults and students. HSE gives guidance and provides professional development for teachers about how to manage and deal effectively with student behavior, and has positive structures for supporting student self-discipline and responsibility. HSE takes rigorous steps to remove obstacles to students’ full access to all school programs. The goal is to provide students with a safe and orderly environment in which to learn and where “all students can develop confidence in their own abilities and are challenged to strive for success.”

HSE has customized and developed its own school handbook based on the AUSL Code of Conduct and the CPS Uniform Discipline Code. There are agreed upon, schoolwide systems and rules that reinforce behavioral excellence: students walk quietly in lines; no unsupervised students are in the halls; and signs are posted throughout the school to reinforce behavioral expectations. The school does not condone authoritarian or harsh discipline measures, which are considered to be ineffective, and to stifle creativity and the desire of students to reach their potential. Instead, the staff reinforce rules and procedures by explicitly teaching, and if need be, re-teaching them, on the premise that some of their students may have never learned how to behave in school.

Teachers can personalize class rules and routines which follow these formal codes, but the principal is responsible for ensure that all staff adhere to the codes and that discipline is administered with consistency. The school has developed conflict resolution strategies and protocols, modeled on AUSL training, that involve the classroom teacher, the student’s counselor and/or advisor, parents, and principal. The principal can

conduct in-school suspensions. However, external suspensions and possible expulsions are conducted in accordance with the CPS Uniform Discipline Code.

The HSE faculty and staff work to create inviting classroom environments and nurture students and their families, which helps students feel secure and ready to learn. Teachers focus on establishing enduring relationships. There are whole school rewards as well as consequences. When personalizing class rules, teachers can model their expectations, and emphasize “catching students being good,” teaching self discipline, and providing opportunities for students to take responsibility for themselves and others. The HSE average 1:28-30 class size requires teachers to be trained in classroom management as well as instruction. Instructional strategies that increase engagement include learning opportunities for all students to work independently, in workshops with small cooperative groups, and in groups guided by teachers.

Within the guidelines of the CPS Performance School Model, HSE has an appointed Advisory Local School Council composed of members of the local community, including parents, teachers and community members. This body meets monthly and assists the principal with important school matters relating to topics such as community engagement, student programs and school safety.

Readiness to Act

Resource Authority

In the AUSL model, resource authority is largely granted by CPS to AUSL as the lead partner, although two of the three pots of turnaround premium funds from the CPS Office for New Schools are designated for particular uses: setting up the new school team, and funding an assistant principal for year 1. Other than these restrictions, and the requirements set on federal and state entitlement funds, AUSL can use the funding from public and private sources as it sees fit.

As mentioned in the Turnaround Approach section above, the central AUSL organization, however, manages its school network tightly, with considerable authority over financial as well as other resources retained in the central office. As discussed there and in the “money” section, the turnaround school principals are expected to propose decisions on the optimal use of resources (financial, staff and other) to drive turnaround and improve student achievement in the particular circumstances their schools face. However, final decisions are subject to approval by the AUSL Managing Director. For example, a principal’s decision to offer staff and/or students financial and non-financial incentives would be subject to approval by the Managing Director.

The principal is required to attend monthly meetings with AUSL officers for, among other things, budgetary reviews. Opportunities are provided on a regular basis for the HSE principal to discuss with AUSL Officers identified funding requirements for specific initiatives and projects beyond the school’s current budget, such as the development of an extended day program and improved technology for student and staff use, both of which are currently in the pipeline for HSE.

Resource Ingenuity

Much of the resource ingenuity for the extra programs and people available for the HSE turnaround rests with the central AUSL organization, which undertakes significant fundraising and has cultivated relationships with many educational and community organizations. It taps financial support from corporations, foundations, and individuals who share their mission, want to support the Chicago neighborhoods they work in, or believe

in AUSL as a national model for how to transform failing urban schools. It collaborates with experts in areas from curriculum to educational data management, and with universities and urban education reform organizations. It has developed curricular enhancement partners to provide its children with programs in athletics, fine art and the performing arts. HSE is just expanding into these areas, with planned fine arts and music programs, starting with a chorus, recently initiated with the Merit School of Music. Lastly, HSE and AUSL have links with community organizations that provide paid and volunteer services in school.

But in terms of financial resources, AUSL and its school leaders also take a comprehensive, creative view of all of the “unrestricted” funding sources available to its schools. So money from the CPS core budget, the CPS Office of New Schools per-pupil turnaround premium, and AUSL fundraising are considered together in determining how to serve the needs of turnaround schools. Each AUSL principal has broad discretion to prioritize how to spend the budget to meet each particular school’s needs, subject to the AUSL Managing Director’s approval. At HSE, the principal was able to use the funds mentioned above to hire two assistant principals, a curriculum coach, three induction/mentoring coaches, Lead Teachers, clerk assistant, a second security officer, teacher assistants, a full-time social worker and dean of students. In making such decisions, new turnaround principals work with AUSL senior staff and coaches to learn how other turnaround schools have successfully used their budgets to support school turnaround. The AUSL central finance staff provides additional support and assistance with specific budgetary procedures.

AUSL is also strategic about where it focuses its fundraising and spending. In particular, it has raised extra money to fund capital projects over and above the CPS-provided initial facilities improvement funds in order to send a strong, visible, positive message to students and the local community that times have changed and that student achievement and success is the focal point of the schools’ work. The nature of refurbishments depends on each school’s priorities and needs, but these generally further enhance school accommodation and ensure that the learning environment meets AUSL’s high expectations and vision.

Agility in the Face of Turbulence

While AUSL’s turnaround model encompasses well-researched and planned programs and processes, the capacity of its leaders and educators also ensures agility to adapt in the face of the challenges inherent in its mission. One of the greatest challenges for HSE has been its actions to build positive and strong relationships with dozens of families, community members, social service organizations and other stakeholders associated with the school’s community. In some cases, there were influential individuals who initially did not want the changes proposed in the turnaround. It took every bit of energy and well coordinated meetings to pursue the “building of community,” to the advantage of the school’s mission. This provides a good example of the management organization’s and school leadership’s ability to respond to circumstances.

To begin with, one of the AUSL’s most senior staff, a leadership coach and former urban principal, spent a significant amount of time throughout the HSE pre-turnaround year and early turnaround year initiating and attending meetings with influential people in the Auburn-Gresham community. Meetings were held with pastors, aldermen, executive directors or directors of community organizations, CPS advisory Local School Council (LSC) parents, and community representatives. The principal successfully reached out to the local corner shop to solicit its owner’s cooperation regarding the time at which the store would stop selling to students in the morning, as this affects attendance and tardiness. School leadership and staff also took opportunities during the pre-turnaround summer program to walk the neighborhood and make connections. These efforts put a ‘face’ on AUSL and opened important channels for two-way communication with HSE.

The HSE principal and assistant principals continue to reach out to the community, especially to parents and families, in many ways. In addition to a monthly formal information and decision-making session with the Advisory Local School Council, a member of staff has been assigned as the parent involvement coordinator, to network with families and plan programs. The school has published a comprehensive school handbook with a strong emphasis on school policies, programs, curriculum, and instruction.

HSE extends invitations to parents to share their skills and experiences with students as part of classroom activities. These numbers are growing, promoted by quarterly programs designed especially for parents, such as math workshops, literacy evenings to support parents' skills of reading with their children/learning at home, and other events. Outreach includes events for prospective parents. The school is in the process of creating a more welcoming space for parents by providing a room in the school where they can meet and have access to a computer and other supplies and equipment. This outreach to parents has been returned in the coin of enthusiastic and increased parental participation in the school. Some parents who were among the most vocal critics of the AUSL contract when it was announced, in fact, now volunteer to go speak to parents at new AUSL turnaround schools to help build community connections and soothe parental anxiety. That in itself may be one of the most vivid testimonials to the success of AUSL's intervention at Harvard.

TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

Artifacts are available in the Resource Center at www.massinsight.org.

Appendix A. CPS RFP

Appendix B. CPS RFP Questions

Appendix C. AUSL RFP Response for HSE

Appendix D. AUSL RFP Response for HSE Attachments

Appendix E. CPS CEO's Data Report HSE 07-08

Appendix F. HSE PD Schedule

Appendix G. HSE School Improvement Plan

Appendix H. AUSL Staff Handbook

Appendix I. HSE Procedures and Non-Negotiables

Appendix J. HSE Student Credo

Comprehensive School Redesign: Hamilton County School District

Perspectives from:

Sharon Vandagriff, President, Hamilton County Education Association

Dan Challenger, President, Public Education Fund

Origins

Hamilton County, Tennessee, has received national recognition for its comprehensive school redesign work and providing support to teachers (particularly to those in struggling schools) through embedded professional development and various incentives. These reforms stem from an intentional and sustained effort among district, union, and foundation leaders to collaborate with one another.

The district was spurred to action when, in 2000, nine of Chattanooga's elementary schools were identified as among the 20 lowest-performing in the state of Tennessee. Larger districts with fewer low-income families, such as Memphis, had fewer schools on this list. According to Sharon Vandagriff, "There has to be a trigger for change. You can't ignore that opportunity." Dan Challenger went further, stating that the "shame of these results was an important catalyst. This was not the community we wanted to live in."

Previously, the original Hamilton County Education Association (HCEA) and Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) had experienced contentious labor negotiations. Then-Superintendent Jesse Register recognized that he needed union support to improve teaching and learning in the district. He reached out to the HCEA with the idea of focusing on low-performing schools as the target of reform. The union immediately agreed.

Key to the improved relations between district and labor leaders, according to Vandagriff and Challenger, was (and remains) interest-based bargaining (IBB), a negotiation strategy in which parties work together to develop mutually beneficial agreements. Vandagriff describes the major emphasis of this approach in her county as "focusing on what's best for the school system."

Process

Leaders from HCDE and HCEA agreed to improve strained relations by attending a joint training in IBB. Encouraged by this emerging emphasis on collaboration between the HCEA and the HCDE, Chattanooga's Benwood Foundation made its first major systemic investment with a focus on the nine lowest performing schools in Hamilton County. This effort came to be known as the Benwood Initiative, with a steering committee consisting of all stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the Public Education Foundation (PEF), together with HCDE, analyzed student achievement data and compiled teacher profiles; they interviewed teachers, principals, parents,

and students; and they conducted focus groups in the community. The PEF worked closely with the district to understand what was going on in local schools. As Challener noted, “The foundation didn’t run off and do it.” Using these data, HCDE and PEF presented a comprehensive reform plan to the Benwood Foundation—a plan that added to the district’s first strategic plan.

Hamilton County’s labor/management team has ten members, five of whom are selected by the school board. The other five are nominated by the HCEA President and approved by the association board. Vandagriff explained that the stability of this team has been important to its success; individuals on the team of ten are not confined to term limits but rather stay until they resign (with rare exceptions). Leaders are retrained in IBB every one to two years. At meetings, there are two external facilitators who are familiar with the approach. Vandagriff added that “We’re so good at it now that when a facilitator couldn’t make it, we proceeded. We didn’t need them!”

Initially the team worked together on the issues of salaries, benefits, and working conditions; on hiring and transfer policy; and on the grievance process. When Hamilton County reconstituted its low-performing schools, teachers were required to reapply for their jobs. The ones who were not rehired were placed at other schools in the district. According to Vandagriff and Challener, this process unfolded smoothly. According to Challener, the district had worked together with the union; the superintendent made a point to speak to all the principals affected by reconstitution; and the union was “courageous” in focusing on the big picture to successfully educate children. A few teachers left the district, but most stayed. While there were challenges associated with teachers being released from the reconstituted schools, the superintendent called on principals in their new (mostly suburban) schools to support these teachers.

The joint negotiation teams in Hamilton County developed an incentive pay program for teachers working in hard-to-staff schools. Challener insisted that this differentiated pay program worked to reward and honor the teachers who stayed in the low-performing schools more than it attracted new teachers to these schools. He said that the funds largely went to teachers “‘in the building’ [as opposed to new ones] who improved their craft.” Publicly acknowledging teachers in these schools (the checks were presented at a dinner event hosted by then-Mayor Bob Corker) was a direct response to discussions in early focus groups, when teachers highlighted the stigma of working in the inner city.

The County’s collaborative efforts did not end with the Benwood Initiative. After its successful implementation, the PEF received \$2.5 million from the National Education Association Foundation (NEAF) to improve low-performing middle schools. In addition, the Lyndhurst Foundation helped to fund Middle Schools for a New Society, supporting districtwide professional development and instructional coaching. Currently, the team is also working on a new teacher induction pilot and an effort to build capacity for National Board Certified teacher candidates. The goals of these efforts are to support beginning teachers in hard-to-staff schools and eventually to place nationally board certified teachers in every school. These ongoing efforts were born of the same collaborative relationships, which Vandagriff describes as “problem solving at its best.”

Recommendations

Vandagriff and Challener identified several keys to their successful reform efforts. Challener said that even though there may be no “recipe” for success in every district, labor-management collaboration can and must happen everywhere.

Building a shared vision. Both Vandagriff and Challener agreed that a sense of common purpose is critical. A focus on giving all children the opportunity to achieve can help overcome differences. Vandagriff added that success depends on maintaining a collaborative culture and commitment to the IBB process.

Including teachers and principals as part of the discussion from the beginning. Challener stressed the importance of listening. Steering committees were formed to include representatives from all stakeholder groups, and the HCEA negotiation team included principal and teacher representatives. Many decisions that were made came directly from concerns raised in the interviews and focus groups with teachers, administrators, parents, and students. These conversations helped to identify needed changes and resources. They also helped to build legitimacy and support. Challener noted, “The plan respected what [stakeholders] said.” For example, teachers’ and administrators’ voices were included in discussions around changing the contract to amend transfer policies and the bidding process. Schools now can recruit teachers early and not leave staffing decisions open until the start of the school year. Principals are no longer locked into accepting the most senior teachers if the principals can provide an explanation for their decisions.

Communicating often; being fair and transparent. The HCEA regularly communicates with its teachers about the reasons for various initiatives and their results. The Association president, Superintendent and PEF president meet monthly (and informally, more often) to discuss and offer updates on initiatives. And a county team goes annually to the NEAF conference.

Offering embedded professional development for teachers. Vandagriff said that teachers in reconstituted schools were treated with great respect, and professional development was offered to improve their teaching skills. All teachers now receive embedded professional development provided by “consulting teachers” and have dedicated time within the week to work with their colleagues.

Building a broad coalition of support. Challener described the district’s collaborative process as a bit like “Stone Soup,” the tale in which poor villagers make individual contributions to make a rich communal meal. Following the Benwood Foundation’s large gift early on, other stakeholders joined in the effort. For example, the mayor contributed ideas (including a home loan forgiveness program for teachers), and other local and national foundations, community groups, and universities got involved. Challener summed up this effort by saying that both individually and collectively, “Everyone...found a way to help.”

MEMORANDUM

of

AGREEMENT

between

**The
Hamilton County Board of
Education**

and

**The
Hamilton County Education
Association**

2010-2011

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ARTICLE VIII - WORKING CONDITIONS

Section 1 – Workday for Teachers

The normal workday for teachers shall be seven (7) hours. Teachers will be at their assigned work location 10 minutes before the workday begins and remain in the afternoon 5 minutes after the workday ends. Teachers may be assigned duties beyond the normal workday, provided, however, that such duties shall be distributed on an equitable basis, as determined by the principal and the faculty.

Section 2 – Workday for Administrators

The workday for administrators shall be determined by the Board.

Section 3 – Definition

Workday shall mean the length of time that an employee is required by his immediate supervisor to be at his assigned work location(s).

Section 4 – Teacher Load

The principal shall provide the following for the teachers in the building if this can be accomplished with the staff assigned to his building:

- (a) With the approval of the principal or his designee, a teacher may leave the building or grounds during his duty-free lunch period.
- (b) Fifty-five minutes of daily duty-free preparation time for classroom teachers on the secondary level. Elementary classroom teachers shall be given at least two and one-half (2½) hours of duty-free preparation time per full school week. This preparation time shall occur during no less than two days and shall consist of a minimum of thirty (30) consecutive minutes per planning period. Duty-free preparation time for classroom teachers is to be used for activities directly related to the instructional program.
- (c) A daily teaching load not to exceed five (5) hours of pupil contact per day for all classroom teachers in a middle or senior high school.
- (d) Teachers shall not be required to complete monthly attendance forms or transportation reports, except that vocational teachers may be required to complete reports required by the State Department for the first three months of the school year.

Section 5 – Duty-Free Lunch

A daily duty-free lunch period equal in length to the scheduled student lunch period at the school shall be provided for teachers.

Teachers shall not be required to attend conferences during duty-free lunch.

Section 6 – Teacher Response

Teachers utilizing duty-free time shall be required to respond to an emergency situation when so directed by the principal. Principals shall minimize disruptions to teachers' planning time caused by activities during the school day.

Section 7 - Effective Learning Environment

The principal is to designate at the beginning of the school year at least one (1) cumulative workday for classroom preparation.

Section 8 – Faculty Meetings

By the end of the first week of the school year, the faculty shall determine the regular schedule for faculty meetings. This shall not preclude the principal from calling faculty meetings necessitated by an emergency situation.

When scheduling regular faculty meetings, the principal shall meet the following conditions:

- (a) A maximum of four meetings per calendar month may be held.
- (b) Faculty meetings shall not exceed two (2) hours during a calendar month. However, no meeting shall exceed one (1) hour in length. If a meeting is to be held for an hour, the Principal shall give the faculty a forty-eight (48) hour advance notice. Meetings held after the end of the student school day shall start within ten (10) minutes after all classes are dismissed.
- (c) Meetings held prior to the start of the student school day shall not exceed thirty minutes.
- (d) Items of school-wide interest submitted by members of the faculty to the principal at least one day in advance of a meeting shall be placed on the agenda. This shall not preclude other items of school-wide interest submitted by the faculty from being discussed.
- (e) Morning meetings shall not be scheduled on Monday or on any day immediately following any holiday or other day upon which teacher attendance is not required at school. Afternoon meetings shall not be called on Fridays or any day immediately preceding any holiday or other day upon which teacher attendance is not required in school.

Section 9 – Inclement Weather

When it is necessary to adjust the student school day due to inclement weather, the employee workday will be adjusted accordingly unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent or his designee.

Section 10 – Itinerant Teachers

Itinerant teachers shall serve extra duties.

The school in which the itinerant teacher is scheduled to serve the greatest amount of time shall be the base school. If an itinerant teacher serves equal amounts in two or more schools, the first scheduled school of the week shall be the base school.

The total duty assignment for an itinerant teacher shall not exceed the duty assignment that the itinerant teacher would have if full-time at the base school.

Lunch and travel time shall not count as planning time.

Section 11 - Notification of Absence

As long as the Substitute Employee Management System is operational, teachers shall be required to make no more than one (1) telephone call in order to secure a substitute. If the Substitute Employee Management System is not operational, the employee may be required to make one additional telephone call to the designated individual. If notification of the employee's absence to the Substitute Employee Management System is not made prior to 60 minutes before the beginning of school, the employee is required to call the school to report their absence. All schools shall have a form of answering service during this 60-minute notification period. Teachers with prescheduled school events must notify the Substitute Employee Management System at least one week in advance of the event.

Section 12 – Solicitations

Teachers shall not be subjected to sales presentations or solicitations against their will at any time. This does not include presentations approved by the superintendent which are related to the employee benefit program.

Section 13 – Staff Development

All local staff development will be scheduled to occur on days (1) identified as staff development days, or (2) after the end of the regular school day or (3) during the time when regular school is not in session.

Section 14 – Equitable Treatment

For the purposes of this contract, equitable treatment shall be defined as fair treatment, non-discrimination, and personal rights.

The employee shall have the right to the following:

- A. The Board, in recognition of the concept of progressive improvement, shall require notification in writing to an employee of any alleged deficiencies that could result in disciplinary action. Such notice shall include expected correction(s) and shall indicate a reasonable time line for such correction(s). In the event that a deficiency could result in the termination of employment, copies of such notices shall be forwarded promptly to the Association.
- B. In cases which could result in disciplinary action, an employee shall be entitled at all times to have present a representative of the Association when he is being issued a reprimand or formally disciplined for any infraction of rules or delinquency in professional performance. When an employee requests representation, no action shall be taken until a representative of the Association is present.
- C. No employee shall be discharged, suspended, formally disciplined, formally reprimanded, adversely evaluated, or deprived of any professional advantage without just cause. All information forming the basis for such disciplinary action shall be made available to the employee upon his request.
- D. The Board and the Association agree that there shall be no discrimination in the hiring, training, assignment, promotion, transfer, or discipline of employees or in the application or administration of this Memorandum of Agreement on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, domicile, marital status, or physical handicap. Further, there shall be no discrimination against any employee because of his membership in the Association, participation in any Association activities or negotiations, or institution of any grievance(s), complaint(s), or proceedings under this Memorandum of Agreement or law with respect to any terms or conditions of employment.

ARTICLE IX - EMPLOYEE ASSIGNMENT

Section 1 – Assignment of Employees

The immediate supervisor shall give written notice of a teacher’s assignment for the forthcoming school year, before the end of the preceding school year, if administratively possible. A newly elected employee shall be given written notice of assignment within seven (7) calendar days of the Superintendent’s action.

Section 2 – Traveling Teachers

Subject to the needs of the total school system, schedules of teachers who are assigned to more than one school shall be arranged so as to reduce, to the extent possible, the amount of travel required.

Section 3 – Job Sharing

Job sharing shall mean the voluntary employment of two tenured professional employees who have elected to share a full-time teaching position (FTE) and make application to the Superintendent. Each employee shall hold the required and necessary state certification for the shared position. The final decision to approve or not to approve job-sharing shall rest with the appropriate building level principal and/or the superintendent. The final decision shall not be grievable.

Non-tenured teachers are not eligible to apply for job-sharing and full-time teachers may not “bump” into a job-share position.

Job-share applications are to be completed and submitted to the school principal by March 15 of each year.

Section 4 - Teacher on Special Assignment

When necessary, the Superintendent may make special temporary assignments of teachers. Teachers on special assignment will continue to be paid at their regular salary based on the teacher pay scale. A teacher on special assignment will return to the same position held provided the special assignment ends within twelve (12) calendar months and the teacher’s former position has not been abolished.

If the special assignment exceeds 12 calendar months, the employee shall be placed in the first available comparable position.

**ARTICLE X - VACANCIES, TRANSFERS,
REASSIGNMENTS AND REDUCTION IN
FORCE**

Section 1 – Definitions

Vacancy is defined as a position created due to a resignation, retirement, promotion, transfer, or dismissal, or the creation of a new position that requires a license to teach in Tennessee.

Teaching Vacancy is defined as a position, full-time or part-time, in which the employee is hired as:

- academic classroom teacher
- guidance counselor
- librarian
- vocational education teacher
- exceptional education teacher

Transfer is defined as the reassignment of a teacher from one Hamilton County school to another.

- A **voluntary transfer** is the reassignment of a teacher from one Hamilton County school to another at the written request of the teacher.
- An **involuntary transfer** is a transfer of a teacher from one Hamilton County school to another that has **not** been requested by the teacher.

Reassignment within the school is defined as the reassignment of a teacher within a school from one grade level and/or subject area with the school. Such reassignment must be within the teacher’s area(s) of certification.

Reduction in Force is defined as the abolition of certificated positions due to budget constraints, decrease in student enrollment, opening of a new school, or change in boundaries or grade levels of a school.

Seniority shall be defined as the total length of service since the most recent day of hire in either the Hamilton County school system or the Chattanooga City school system. Those who were employees during the 1996-97 school year in either system shall retain all currently recognized seniority. If more than one employee has the same length of service, seniority shall be determined by the date of the written contract acceptance. Employees will continue to accumulate seniority while on paid leave. Seniority will be frozen while an employee is on non-paid leave.

Section 2 - Posting Vacancies

The identification of teaching positions for a given school year will be determined through staffing conferences held during the second semester of each school year. Decisions will be based on student projections and instructional program needs. Teaching vacancies for a given school year will be posted weekly by the last Friday in February through the 16th working day prior to the day that teachers are to report for the new school year. The posting will contain the following:

- Job Location
- Job Title
- Job Posting Number

Vacancies are posted on the HCDE website (www.hcde.org). Positions with bonuses/performance pay shall be posted as professional opportunities.

In case of a reduction of position(s) at an individual school, the principal should complete position adjustments through reassignments before voluntary transfer requests are considered.

Vacancies that occur after the cutoff date (as defined in paragraph one (1) of this section) will be filled with a qualified applicant in a “temporary” position until the end of the current school year.

Vacancies that are posted prior to the cutoff date, but remain open after the first official day teachers report, will be filled with a qualified applicant in a “temporary” position until the end of the current school year. After the first official day teachers report, no transfers, except approved by the Superintendent, will be allowed. All temporary positions will be posted during the next posting season.

Section 3 – Promotional Vacancies

A promotional position for purposes of this section is any administrative or supervisory position paying a salary differential above the general teachers’ salary schedule in Appendix A. All vacant or newly created promotional vacancies will be posted as they occur and will list specific essential job functions. Employees who desire to apply for a promotional vacancy must complete a transfer application for each position of interest and meet the posting criteria.

Promotional vacancies shall be filled in accordance with uniform interview procedures seeking the best qualified applicant to fill the position. Preference shall be given to qualified employees already employed by the system.

Section 4 – Voluntary Transfer Procedures

A bid sheet shall be made available on the HCDE website. All completed bid sheets can be submitted during the first full week in February of each year, indicating one-to-a-maximum-of-ten schools a teacher would like to be considered for if a permanent position becomes available during the district hiring season. Only teachers with current teaching licenses are allowed to bid. Emergency permit teachers may not submit a Hamilton County bid sheet. Teacher groups eligible to complete a bid sheet are:

- Tenured
- Non-tenured completing their first year of teaching and reelected
- Temporary Position - End of year (EOY) assignment
- Interim Position - The position belongs to a teacher who is on leave of absence and is scheduled to return or planning to return
- System-wide Substitute - Used every day in certain hard-to-staff schools or Benwood schools and paid \$75 per day but with no benefits; assignment will vary each day
- Long-term Substitute - 20-day (or longer) consecutive assignment (certified teacher)
- District Unassigned teachers

A first year probationary teacher (non-tenured) may apply for a transfer upon a recommendation for continued employment. Teachers completing their second year of service must remain in their assigned school until tenure is granted. Tenured teachers may apply for a transfer in any given year.

Except in the case of a promotion, only one transfer will be granted per hiring season. The Superintendent may transfer any employee due to extenuating and/or unusual circumstances or for the good of the system.

When a vacancy occurs, the principal writes a Job List which is sent to the Personnel Office and is placed in the school's Job List Notebook. The information on a Job List includes:

- Job Location
- Job Title
- Certification Requirements
- Requirements
- Preferred Requirements

When a vacancy is identified, a Job List is received by Personnel/Human Resources and is available online. The principal will then receive a Roster of Teachers/Applicants Bidding on Jobs. The principal is required to interview seven (7) of those who bid for his/her school. Of these seven:

- Five (5) shall be tenured.
- Of the five (5) tenured applicants, three (3) shall be the most senior of those who bid.
- If fewer than five (5) tenured applicants bid on a position, all properly certified tenured applicants will be interviewed

A principal is not required to re-interview a teacher who has previously been interviewed during a hiring season when another position at the school is identified. It is the option of the principal to do so when Job List requirements and preferences are different. However, if said teacher is among the five tenured and the principal elects not to reinterview, said teacher must be considered for the position.

The receiving principal shall interview applicants based on the following criteria:

- Length of service
- Posting criteria
- Communication skills (oral and written)
- Instructional program needs of the school
- Reason(s) for applying
- Earned degrees
- Additional training
- Additional endorsements
- Previous relevant experience
- Enhancing diversity
- Grant requirements
- Extra-curricular needs of the school

Selection of an individual to fill a vacancy shall be based on length of service as the determining factor unless, based on the listed criteria, the principal determines that another applicant is more qualified for the position.

The Board and the Association recognize the need to aggressively recruit and hire minority employees. In order to assist with diversity among the certificated staffs, the superintendent may assign employees to vacant positions throughout the school system.

Employees satisfactorily completing a temporary or interim assignment will be considered new applicants. If a tenured employee's request for a transfer is not honored, the employee may, up to ten (10) work days following the date the vacancy is filled, make an appeal to the superintendent or his designee. The appeal must be in writing. The superintendent may transfer any employee due to extenuating and/or unusual circumstances or for the good of the school system.

Section 5 – Involuntary Transfer

In the event there is a reduction in force at a school site due to budget cuts, program changes, decrease in student enrollment, or other good cause, volunteers from the affected area(s) will be requested by the school principal. If no one volunteers to transfer, the principal will then abolish the position and implement an involuntary transfer. Seniority shall be the determining factor in an involuntary transfer. However, exceptions to seniority may be made if necessitated by any of the following criteria:

- Certification
- Consideration of diversity within the school
- School's instructional program needs
- Other specialized training
- Extra-curricular assignment needs

Any employee who is transferred involuntarily after the beginning of the 201-day school year shall be given written notice of transfer a minimum of five (5) days prior to the effective date of transfer and written justification from the site level administrator if so requested. The last three (3) of these five (5) days shall be compensated with no classroom responsibilities in order to allow the teacher to move classrooms and prepare for the new assignment. After the start of a school year for students, if a teacher is internally reassigned due to a grade level change and/or change in course offerings and the reassignment requires the teacher to be re-located to a different physical location within the same building, he/she shall have a minimum of one (1) day without students to move.

A teacher who is involuntarily transferred from a school due to an expected enrollment decline shall be permitted to transfer back to that school if the expected enrollment decline does not materialize and the position is again available on the 10th day of student enrollment.

If the employee objects to the involuntary transfer or reassignment, the employee may request a meeting with the superintendent or his designee. This meeting shall be held prior to the involuntary transfer or reassignment takes place.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, an employee shall not be involuntarily transferred more often than every three years.

Section 6 – Lay-Offs

When the superintendent determines, and the Board approves, that a reduction in the number of certificated employees is necessary due to budget cuts or reduction in student enrollment, certificated employees who cannot be reassigned will be placed in lay-off status. Teachers placed in layoff status in the affected area(s) will be determined by system-wide seniority. Employees with the least seniority will be laid off first. However, the Board, upon the recommendation of the superintendent, reserves the right to make exceptions due to instructional needs of the school district or other federal and/or state mandates.

Before an employee is placed in layoff status, every effort will be made to reassign the employee to another area in which the employee is certified, provided a vacancy exists. Non-tenured teachers who are identified for layoff will be terminated.

In the event that two or more employees in the same affected area(s) have the same seniority date, he/she will be placed in layoff status based on the date the written response to the contract offer was received in the Personnel Office.

An employee on leave of absence shall be eligible for layoff as though he were in active service.

An employee laid off as provided herein shall have the option of continuing membership in the Board's health insurance plan by paying full premium cost to the Board each month while he is laid off.

The administration shall provide written notice to each employee who may be affected by a surplus action or layoff at the earliest date possible. Such notice shall include a specific reason(s) for the layoff.

In the event of a layoff, the superintendent or his designee shall meet with the representative of the Association to explain the reason(s) for the layoff, the manner of implementing the layoff, and to offer the Association the opportunity to make suggestions relative to the layoff. The administration shall, within three (3) working days of the Board meeting in which the layoff is enacted, provide the Association with (1) a list of employees laid off, (2) their total years of service in the Hamilton County school system, (3) the date of the written contract acceptance, and (4) area(s) of certification.

Employees placed in layoff status will be assigned a recall number within the area of certification.

Section 7 – Recall

Employees who are laid off as provided for in Section 5 of this Article shall be placed on a recall list. An employee shall remain on the recall list for twenty-four (24) months so long as he/she notifies the Board by April 15 of each year that he/she continues to be available for employment. The Board shall annually (no later than May 1) provide the Association a list of those who have retained a place on the recall list.

Subject to total educational needs of the system as assessed by the superintendent and approved by the Board, tenured employees on the recall list in the affected areas shall be recalled in order of their total length of service in the Hamilton County school system.

Employees shall be notified of recall by certified mail. Within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of the offer to return to employment, or within fifteen (15) calendar days of the postmark, whichever is sooner, the employee shall accept the position in writing, or it shall be determined that he/she has declined the offer. It shall be the responsibility of each laid-off employee to keep the Personnel Office informed in writing of any change of address.

If any employee declines an offer of recall as provided for in this Section, either by action or by inaction, the employee's name shall be placed at the bottom of the recall list. No further recall obligation shall be required for that employee until all other laid-off employees in the area of certification have been offered positions.

A laid-off individual who refuses a second offer of employment will be terminated. An employee shall have no recall rights after twenty-four (24) months.

An employee on Board approved leave shall be eligible for recall at the termination of his/her leave.

Employees affected by a layoff as provided in Section 5 of this Article, on their request, shall be placed on a special substitute list at the employee's request. As far as possible, personnel on this list shall be utilized both in day-to-day and long-term substitute assignments before persons on the regular substitute list are called.

An employee re-employed by exercising his/her recall rights shall be given full credit for any previously established teaching experience in the Hamilton County school system.

Section 8 – Notice to the Association

The names of all employees transferred or reassigned, and the positions that they left and will assume, shall be made available to the president of the Association at the same time that the employees are notified of the decision.

Section 9 - Diversity

The Association and the Board recognize the need to develop and implement measures that will protect and promote diversity in the employment and assignment of certificated personnel.

Section 10 – Reconstitution

A. Definitions

Reconstitution shall mean a process whereby all or a portion of the current positions at one or more school(s) shall be declared by the Superintendent to be vacant and the current faculty members at that school shall have to reapply to the principal for a position at the school.

Unassigned teacher shall mean, for the purposes of this section only, a tenured teacher at a reconstituted school who was not selected by the principal to remain at that school.

B. Procedures

All available positions in the reconstituted school will be advertised in accordance with Section 2 of this Article.

Teachers will be selected to fill the vacancies at the reconstituted school in accordance with Section 3 of this Article.

Unassigned teachers will be given first opportunity to interview for advertised vacancies, for which they apply.

The Superintendent will assign any unassigned teacher who is unable to secure a position through the normal voluntary transfer process.

The administration, in collaboration with the HCEA, will set timelines to accomplish the above procedures.

In Hamilton County, Tennessee, the school district, teachers union, community leaders, and several local and national foundations have worked together closely for the past seven years to close the achievement gap.

When We Decide to Do Something, We Can Work Together to Get It Done

Collaborating in Chattanooga to Close the Achievement Gap

A case study from

**Philanthropy's Role in Fostering Partnerships:
Collaborating with Unions, School Districts and Communities**

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There’s a story Chattanoogaans tell about themselves that reflects their sense of their ability to get things done. In the 1980s, Chattanooga was a city in decline with a polluted river and an abandoned city core.¹ According to the story, people looked around at the state of things and said, “We have to do something.” They went all over town to get ideas about what to do. Not too long after, Chattanooga embarked on Vision 2000, a program that set out to transform the city. The results have been astonishing. Since then, the city has undergone a transformation and has received national recognition for its revitalization programs, especially its efforts to revive its downtown and riverfront. The transformation myth embodies Chattanoogaans’ belief that “when we decide to do something, we can work together to get it done.” It is this belief and the spirit of cooperation it produces that underlie the work on closing the achievement gap currently underway in Hamilton County, Tennessee—where, over the past seven years, the district, the teachers union, community leaders, and several local and national foundations have worked together closely to “get it done.”

I. Setting the Stage

On July 1, 1997, the Chattanooga City Public Schools and the Hamilton County School System merged.² The merger combined two very different systems—one largely rural and suburban, with a predominantly white student population, the other primarily urban, with a predominantly African American population.³ It also brought together two unions—one that practiced adversarial bargaining, the other collaborative bargaining—into one organization. The previous October, the newly constituted school board had chosen Dr. Jesse Register, who had overseen two mergers in North Carolina (a weak union state that does not have a collective bargaining law), to lead the school district.

By the time Register arrived, the difficult task of combining two school systems, merging two teacher unions, and creating one budget and one school board had already begun. Some critical pieces had been accomplished. Rather than simply combine the two districts, the Board of Education had asked the Chattanooga Public Education Foundation—a 501(c)(3) local education fund working to increase student achievement in the county—to help it design a brand-new system. Despite their differences, the two unions had spent a year working through their suspicion, fear, and distrust to overcome geographic, social, and racial boundaries and forge a single new union. Symbolic of an *esprit de corps* and commitment to working collaboratively, both union offices were sold and a new office was purchased.

Merging two school systems and two unions was complicated and required intricate negotiations. County and city wages and textbooks had to be comparable. Equal numbers of physical education and music teachers and library aides had to be hired to work in the county and city. Hiring policies and city and county contracts needed to be standardized. But the intricacies were not simply limited to balancing resources.

¹ With a population of approximately 155,000, Chattanooga is the seat of Hamilton County (population 312,000) and the fourth-largest city in Tennessee. A former Confederate city, Chattanooga once served as a vital railroad center that linked the North and South. In the 1930s, it grew and prospered with the advent of the Tennessee Valley Authority. By the 1980s, Chattanooga’s downtown was dying, and although once a large manufacturing city, it was losing jobs.

² The history of the Chattanooga City Public Schools began in 1941, when city voters approved a charter to create their own school system, wanting to break away from the rural county, which the city perceived as unable to educate city children properly. Over the years, however, the middle class fled to the county and eventually brought a successful lawsuit to obtain a larger share of the state funds. Frustrated at having to pay taxes for city and county schools and concerned that its school system was failing to provide a decent education for its students, the Chattanooga school board voted in 1994 to give up its school system and join the surrounding Hamilton County district.

³ At the time of the merger, the Hamilton County School System was 94 percent white and 4.1 percent African American. In contrast, the Chattanooga City School System was 34.8 percent white and 62.9 percent African American. Approximately 20 percent of Hamilton County’s 23,400 students were eligible for free and reduced lunch, compared to 59 percent of the 19,700 students in the Chattanooga City Schools. Student achievement levels for Hamilton County were much higher than those in the Chattanooga City Schools.

Various constituent groups were apprehensive about the merger. Some worried that the bright spots among the city schools—for example, the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, a successful elementary school that later grew to include kindergarten through grade 12—might be negatively affected. Not only were some African American parents worried that their children would be unfairly treated, but leaders in the community were concerned that the percentage of African American educators would decline. Believing their school system to be superior, some county parents worried that city pupils would lower academic standards and test scores.

II. Tackling the Achievement Gap: Creating an Infrastructure for Change

Although there was wide agreement that Register had done a good job of merging the districts in North Carolina, some long-time observers wondered about his commitment to African American children and whether he was knowledgeable about teaching and learning. They were surprised when some of his earliest moves as superintendent were decidedly focused on curriculum and instruction.

Register immediately began creating an infrastructure upon which improvements in student achievement could be built. Between 1998 and 2000, he made several changes in the central office. In 1998, he established a Division of Data and Accountability with the capacity to disaggregate data and enable schools and staff to use data more effectively. With support from the Annenberg Foundation, he directed approximately 300 teachers working in city/county teams to create new academic standards for the district, rather than use off-the-shelf curriculum standards. He changed the district zone lines, making it easier to desegregate the schools without busing, and implemented a magnet school program, thus resolving a civil rights complaint.

The following year, Register created a Leadership Institute to provide professional development for school leaders to work on whole-school improvement and built professional development time into the school calendar. Prior to the merger, the urban schools had allocated no funds for professional development, and the suburban schools had allocated only \$100 per school per year for professional development activities.

III. Establishing a Shared Vision and Priorities: Moving from No to Yes

As these changes were unfolding, the union and district were negotiating a new contract. Having come from a state where unions have no bargaining power, Register was inexperienced when it came to negotiations and clashed with a teachers union that was more resourceful than those he had encountered in his previous positions. For more than a year after arriving in Tennessee, Register and the union were at odds over the contract. One major hurdle: the teacher transfer policy, which resulted in ineffective teachers being reassigned to the schools with the greatest need for highly skilled teachers. When Register tried to remove the policy from the contract, negotiations became very contentious, and the district and union reached an impasse that lasted 14 months.

But, according to Gerry Dowler, UniServ coordinator of the Hamilton County Education Association, the local NEA chapter, “Register was a quick study.” One day, Register went to the union leaders and told them he wanted to work together with them on solving problems. In 1999, he began having dinners with the union leadership to talk about the issues facing the school district. Finally, the local union agreed to try collaborative bargaining, and the Tennessee Education Association (the state NEA affiliate) came in to train the union leadership. Once the union and the district began collaborative bargaining—the union making its concerns clear, and the district sharing the problems it needed to solve—the union became part of the decision-making process and began working with the district administration to find mutually acceptable solutions to challenges confronting the system.

At the same time, the evidence was mounting that the distribution of teachers was an urgent problem. In 2000, with support from the U.S. Department of Education, the Public Education Foundation and the school district undertook a

major study of teacher quality within the district. The study found that the lowest-performing schools had the least-experienced teachers (43 percent of teachers had less than three years of experience), the highest teacher turnover rates, and the most difficulty finding substitute teachers. That same year, when the state identified the lowest-performing schools in Tennessee, nine of the 20 lowest-performing schools were located in Chattanooga. Only 11 percent of pupils in these schools were reading at grade level, 94 percent were eligible for free or reduced lunch, and 87 percent were African American.

The Public Education Foundation’s data helped to create a common understanding of the problem and set the stage for a collaborative approach. While attending the NEA Challenge of Change conference, Register, Dowler, and Dan Challener, the newly hired president of the Public Education Foundation, began to develop a “Strategic Plan for Success” for the new district. The plan envisioned an aggressive recruitment strategy that focused on attracting and retaining quality teachers in the schools that needed them most, coupled with provisions for training and supporting teachers who wished to improve the quality of their practice. “We started with data, and we’ve never let go,” noted Challener.

The specifics of the Strategic Plan for Success were developed in partnership with the union, which reached out to the rank and file through consulting, canvassing, and public relations activities (an ongoing process that continues today). Union leaders surveyed the membership to determine which issues teachers believed were the greatest impediments to student success and what changes and inducements teachers needed to overcome those issues.

With the Strategic Plan for Success as a backdrop, the school district and teachers union negotiated a new contract that addressed the teacher transfer issue head-on, putting all schools on the same hiring timeline. It also included an agreement to re-staff the district’s low-performing schools and to provide bonus pay. This last piece was championed by Chattanooga Mayor Bob Corker and the local business community and was forged through tough, but amicable, negotiations with the union.

In addition, the district converted 14 central office administrative positions in curriculum and instruction into 38 consulting teacher positions assigned to the schools in the central city, where the consulting teachers could serve as curriculum specialists, conduct demonstration lessons, observe other teachers, and provide non-evaluative feedback. To further advance student achievement in the struggling schools, in 2002 the district also created a Division of Urban Education responsible for city schools and charged with better utilization of federal funds. The new division gave line authority to key administrators and brought together all of the elements necessary to improve city schools—curriculum, instruction, budgeting, and school leadership—a move that facilitated efforts to close the achievement gap.

IV. Establishing and Maintaining Priorities: Foundations Join the Effort

Chattanooga’s Public Education Foundation, considered one of the best local education funds in the United States, played a critical role in the 1997 city-county school district merger and has since maintained its involvement with the union and school district. A city with a strong local foundation community, Chattanooga is also home to the Benwood Foundation, the Lyndhurst Foundation, and the Osborne Foundation, among others. These local funders, together with national foundations, have provided capital to support the joint initiatives of the Public Education Foundation, the union, and the school district to improve student achievement.

In 2001, the Benwood Foundation—after engaging in a year-long study of education in Hamilton County prompted by the reports on Chattanooga’s urban schools—decided to get involved. Created in 1944, the Benwood Foundation had funded numerous projects in public and private schools in Chattanooga but had previously operated reactively, waiting for groups to approach. This time, however, Benwood took a proactive approach, issuing a request for proposals to engage in major school reform in the nine struggling schools.

When the Benwood Foundation announced its intention to support the city’s underachieving elementary schools, some

members of the community were skeptical. The publisher of the local newspaper noted that some of the paper’s readers considered reforming the schools a hopeless cause and a waste of money. “You may as well just buy some wood,” he recalled one reader commenting. “At least you’d have some heat.”

That same year, the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded \$8 million to the Public Education Foundation, which pledged to raise an additional \$6 million and work in partnership with the district and union to improve achievement at the high school level.

By 2002, the high school reorganization was underway. High schools were reconfigured into small learning communities organized as academies—allied health sciences, teacher training, engineering—that embedded career-based lessons into state standards. This was followed in 2003 by the adoption of a single-track curriculum requiring all students to complete a course of study that includes mathematics, science, foreign language, fine arts, and other core subjects. The goal of these changes is to raise the achievement of all high school students, narrow the achievement gap between college prep and vocational students, provide equal access to high-level courses, and ensure that all students are prepared to attend college or move directly into the workforce.

Other foundations and community groups soon got involved. In cooperation with the union, the mayor (who formed the Community Education Alliance, composed of business and community leaders), a number of local funders, and the Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise created a package of incentives to attract and retain accomplished teachers at the nine elementary schools targeted by the Benwood Foundation grant. Teachers in these schools are now eligible for mortgage assistance to purchase a primary residence in selected downtown neighborhoods, for a full scholarship to a master’s degree program under the Osborne Foundation Fellows Initiative, and for free legal assistance from the Chattanooga Bar Association.

In addition to these incentives, teachers and principals are eligible for cash awards for outstanding student growth as measured by the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). Awards are provided on a classroom—and a school-wide—basis.

At the end of 2003, the remaining weak link in the Hamilton County School District was its middle schools. Invited to apply for a grant from The NEA Foundation to close the achievement gap, Hamilton County felt it was poised to take the lessons it had learned through the Benwood initiative and apply them to its middle schools. The NEA Foundation awarded Hamilton County \$2.5 million over five years, requiring the union and school district to work hand-in-hand to close the achievement gap in an effort to ensure greater buy-in on the part of the union and leverage the expertise of the rank-and-file membership.

V. Maintaining Progress and Partnerships in Tough Fiscal Times

Skeptics may have doubted Hamilton County’s ability to close the achievement gap, but so far they have been proven wrong. Benwood Foundation Executive Director Corinne Allen notes that by leading the Hamilton County Schools through this process, Superintendent Register, who initially was reluctant to focus attention on low-achieving schools, has been “transformed from a healer to a reformer.”

Overall, student achievement levels have increased in Hamilton County. In 2003, 82.2 percent of all students scored at the proficient and advanced levels in reading, language, and writing. A year later, this number jumped to 86 percent. Comparable gains were achieved in mathematics, where the percentage of all students scoring at proficient and advanced levels grew from 78 percent in 2003 to 82 percent in 2004.

Although white students continue to score better than students from ethnic minority groups on standardized tests, the achievement gap between white students and students of color is shrinking, with the latter achieving substantially higher year-to-year gains. In mathematics, African American students’ proficiency rates grew from 59.9 percent in 2003 to 67

percent in 2004. Hispanic students logged similar gains. Native Americans made the largest gains in mathematics, with 95 percent achieving a proficiency rating in 2004, compared to 84.7 percent in 2003.

As a group, the nine Benwood schools made greater gains on the TVAAS than 90 percent of the schools in the state. In 2003, the Hardy School, one of the Benwood schools, made greater gains than any other elementary school in the state, with the exception of one. Hardy now serves as a model even for Hamilton County’s more affluent schools as they craft their improvement plans. Progress is also beginning to show at the high schools, where the latest promotion rate from ninth to tenth grade has risen from 73 to 83 percent.

All aspects of the Strategic Plan for Success—curriculum standards, a comprehensive professional development plan for teachers and school leaders, the cash and non-cash incentives—contributed to the steady improvement in closing the achievement gap. One researcher explained that it is difficult to ascertain how tightly articulated the various initiatives are and to disentangle which pieces of the plan have produced the most gains. This is a dilemma common to school districts engaged in major reforms, particularly those that result from several initiatives. While it is impossible to know to what extent any particular gains are attributable to the union-district-community collaboration, it is unlikely that the significant changes and progress to date could have been accomplished without it.

Today, despite the real student gains and important new work across the school system, the reform movement in Hamilton County has reached a crossroads: the district’s budget faces an uncertain future. Superintendent Register has strong support on the school board, which has renewed his contract through 2007, and has the backing of the union leadership and the local foundation presidents, one of whom has secured positive press coverage for the superintendent and the district’s accomplishments.⁴ A recent survey suggests that 71 percent of the community is willing to pay more taxes to support the schools. However, county commissioners hold the purse strings, and a majority are not at all eager to raise taxes or seek new revenues.

The commissioners recently voted 5-4 against a property tax increase that would have raised a much-needed \$20 million for the cash-strapped schools, precipitating a 9 percent cut to the \$247 million budget and reducing teaching positions, textbook purchases, and school athletic programs. Some of the more antagonistic commissioners have called for Register’s resignation, even offering \$400,000 to buy out his contract. (When asked if he intended to be “blackmailed out of [his] job,” Register was adamant that he wasn’t about to be.)

Commenting on what this has meant for the school district, Sheila Young, the associate superintendent for secondary education, noted that the school district has had to cut 99.5 teaching positions. At the high schools, this has meant doing without 34 additional teachers, approximately two per school, who were to have helped develop the career academies. Despite the budget situation, Young believes that the work will continue—in part because the school district has learned that “what you can’t pay for, you learn how to barter for.” For example, she says, the school district transformed six of its 13 inclement weather days into professional development days, freeing up \$6 million worth of operating costs to compensate for budget cuts.

In November and December of 2004, the superintendent met with the teachers to discuss the impact of the budget cuts on their classrooms and to ask them what they felt their most important needs were. Young is confident that the district and the teachers will weather the budget cuts.

Although Tennessee spends more on poor students than on rich ones—\$155 more per student in 2002—it lags behind most states in its overall funding of education. The state is currently considering changes in how public schools are funded, which could mean as much as \$10 to \$13 million more for Hamilton County (under current funding formulas, the county ranks last in per-pupil funding from the state). Community members are encouraging voters and legislators to support the change. In a September 2004 editorial, the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* implored the governor to revise

⁴ The Benwood Foundation has not sought to secure or slant any media coverage of the Benwood Initiative or the superintendent.

the funding formula so that Hamilton County would receive a fair share of state funds. And the local branch of Stand for Children has been vigorously campaigning to make citizens aware of the need to fund the schools adequately.

VI. Conclusion: Can All Kids Achieve? What Do We Really Believe?

Efforts underway in Hamilton County show how a union can work closely with district administrators, local and national foundations, and community groups to implement strategies for closing the achievement gap. This work also showcases how local politics and inadequate funding can hamper progress toward achieving important goals. Dan Challener, president of the Public Education Foundation, believes that the real issue being played out in Hamilton County is whether the larger community is committed to ensuring that its schools educate all students of all races and ethnicities—not just the 10 to 20 percent it used to educate. This is a theme present in every school district, not just Hamilton County—one that provides an opportunity for educators and non-educators alike to reflect on the fundamental beliefs that guide their actions.

A mere eight years ago, according to an informed observer, Chattanooga’s schools “hadn’t even moved into the 20th century.” Can this city that has just turned the corner in transforming its school system maintain the highest standards for all students while sustaining progress and enthusiasm for change? The Hamilton County partners have made considerable progress toward closing the achievement gap, yet they still have many hurdles to overcome. By working together to solve problems, not only have the school district and union reduced the number of grievances, but they have also been able to devote more time to figuring out how to serve students better. The ability to find common ground, to put critical issues on the table, and to engage in open, honest dialogue is helping the district maintain its forward momentum despite massive budget cuts.

Whether the successes and lessons learned from the elementary schools can be effectively applied to the middle and high school level—where the challenges are much greater—is an open question. It remains to be seen whether Chattanooga’s belief that “when we decide to do something, we can work together and get it done” can help them transform all of their schools.

Questions to Consider

These questions may be useful for other communities to assess whether similar collaborations are possible to close the achievement gap in their schools.

- Much of the Hamilton County story is about relationships among key individuals in leadership roles. What is in place that will survive changes in union and district leadership? What can foundations do to make sure that important work to close the achievement gap survives these transitions?
- How does the union balance its commitment to collaborating with district administrators on matters pertaining to the achievement gap with its obligations to advocate for, and defend the rights of, its members? What can foundations do to support union leaders who are willing to take on this dual, and at times very challenging, role?
- What issues have the union, district, community, and foundations in Hamilton County not yet addressed that are critical to closing the achievement gap and that require collaborative action?
- What is unique about the Hamilton County story? What is useful about the Hamilton County experience for other locations where the union, district, community, and philanthropic sector are all striving to close the achievement gap?

Appendix

Important Dates

1997

- City and county school district merger
- New district-wide academic standards created

1998

- New Division of Data and Accountability established
- Magnet schools established

1999

- District initiates professional development plan and provides time for professional development during the school year
- Leadership Institute established for principals and other school leaders
- District and union make the transition from adversarial to collaborative bargaining
- District identifies low-performing schools

2000

- Central office positions converted to school-based instructional coaching and support positions
- District and partners conduct a teacher quality study, examining teacher experience, placement, and retention
- Strategic Plan for Success developed after attending the NEA Challenge for Change conference in Colorado Springs

2001

- Union and district negotiate a framework that includes pay incentives, a revised teacher transfer policy, and aggressive recruitment strategies
- Benwood Foundation Initiative begins to close the achievement gap in nine low-performing elementary schools
- Carnegie Corporation of New York awards \$8 million grant to improve student achievement at the high school level

2002

- District adopts a single-path high school curriculum
- District establishes a new division in urban education

2003

- Package of incentives developed to attract highly effective teachers to the district’s neediest schools
- Osborne Foundation Fellows Initiative underwrites the cost of master’s degrees for teachers who work in targeted elementary schools

2004

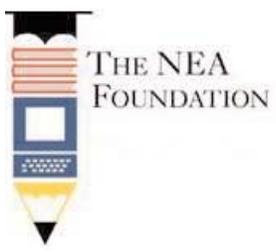
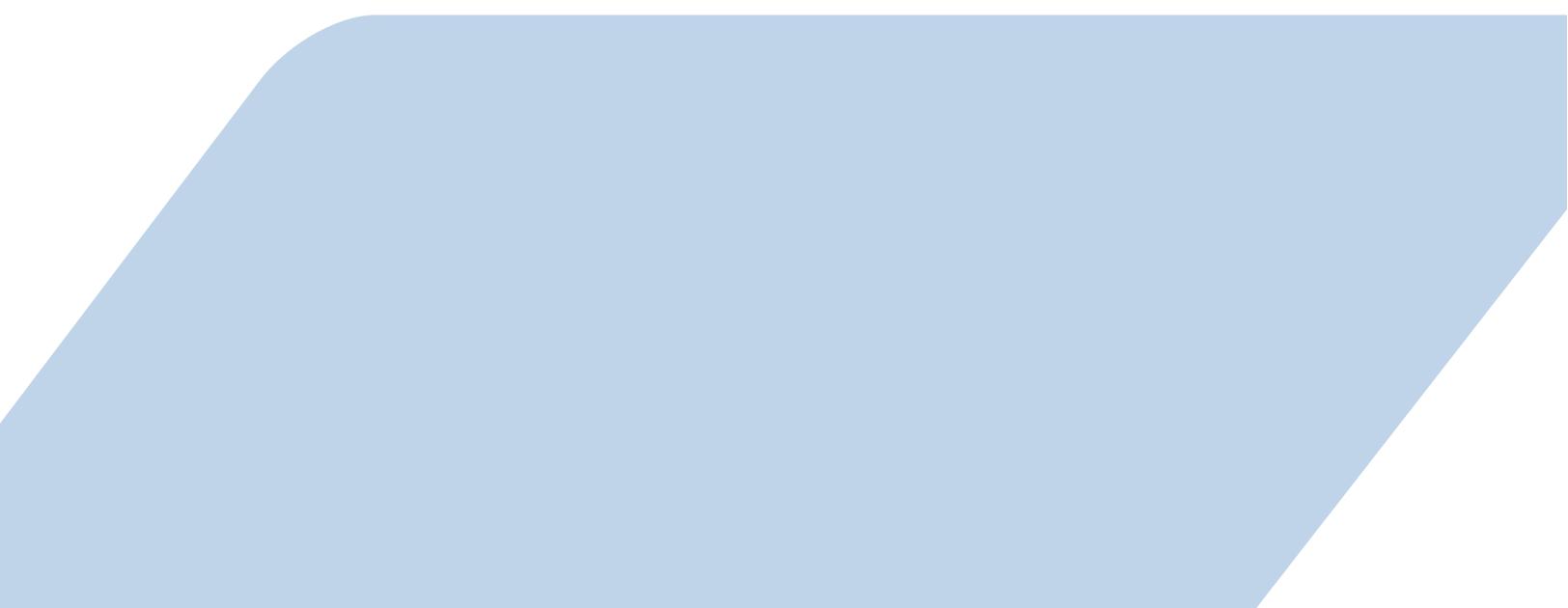
**Case Study from “Philanthropy’s Role in Fostering Partnerships:
Collaborating with Unions, School Districts and Communities”**

GFE Member Briefing • February 10, 2005 • New York City

- The NEA Foundation awards a grant to the union, district, and community partners to close the achievement gap in the middle schools

Reducing the Achievement Gap Through District/Union Collaboration:

THE TALE OF TWO SCHOOL DISTRICTS



REDUCING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP THROUGH DISTRICT/UNION COLLABORATION:

THE TALE OF TWO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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REDUCING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP THROUGH DISTRICT/UNION COLLABORATION:

THE TALE OF TWO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future has challenged the nation to assure that every child has "competent, caring, qualified teachers in schools organized for success."¹ It is a goal that has become the law of the land, through the *No Child Left Behind* legislation that requires all schools to be staffed by high quality teachers and all schools to meet adequate yearly progress. These goals are critical to our nation's economic success, cultural advancement, and moral core. Turning goals into reality is no easy task, and districts around the country are struggling every day with this challenge.

In looking for examples of districts that were making gains both in assuring teacher quality and in reducing gaps in student achievement, we continually came to Clark County, Nevada and Hamilton County, Tennessee. While the road to reform and the specific steps each district took were different, they shared a fundamental element – in both districts, success can be directly linked to the collaboration of the local teachers' union and the school district. Single-minded focus on improving student achievement and a willingness to be flexible allowed these two, often adversarial groups, to work together with outstanding results. Their stories are proof that unions and districts can collaborate successfully to improve student achievement. Clark County and Hamilton County also provide guidance to other districts as they seek support in teaching and learning for all.

¹National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. *What Matters Most*. (1996).

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, NEVADA

IN THE BEGINNING... THE HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF COLLABORATION

The Clark County story is one that exemplifies what is possible when union and district administrators come together and work toward the common goal of improved student achievement. Moving beyond past differences was necessary and difficult, but the results were worth the effort. By focusing on student achievement, they were able to improve the culture of their schools and make them successful and exciting places to teach and learn. (See Table 1 in Appendix 1)

Clark County is a complex and rapidly changing place. With 303,000 students and 35,000 employees, Clark County School District (CCSD) is the fifth largest school district in the U.S.² Since 1991, it has been the fastest growing school district in the nation, increasing by 12,000 to 13,000 net students each year. At the beginning of the 1990-1991 school year, the district opened 18 new schools on the same day, and continues to open between eight and 18 new schools every year. Time to reflect is a luxury in Clark County—just meeting the day-to-day needs of this continually changing district is an enormous challenge.

A booming economy, business friendly tax policy, and overall population growth created this ever-increasing enrollment challenge and demand for new teachers. Each year the district hires between 1,800 and 2,500 new teachers. Three-fourths of all new hires come from out-of-state (and some from out-of-country), and adjusting to the urban setting is often daunting for these legions of new teachers.

On average, Clark County needs a new school every month, creating a tremendous demand for site administrators. In the

2005-2006 school year, over half of the site administrators were in their first three years as a principal, assistant principal or dean. Lacking experience or expertise in administration, professional development for administrators largely concentrated on operational issues, making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) according to federal requirements, and using data. There was little opportunity to focus on building professional capacity in staff, empowering teachers, or building and sustaining leadership teams.

The pressures of filling so many empty spaces with new teachers and principals kept CCSD from accomplishing many of its student achievement goals. More than half of CCSD schools have been designated “at risk,”³ and the teacher attrition rate in these schools was particularly alarming. In the Northeast (NE) Region, where many of the most at-risk schools are concentrated, teacher turnover was significant: of the 1,102 teachers who left CCSD in 2004-2005, 211 or 19.2 percent were from the NE Region.⁴

Prior to 2003 the district had made teacher recruitment and hiring its central focus. They had not considered how better teacher retention measures could reduce vacancies created by teacher attrition, or what might be the underlying factors causing greater attrition in some schools more than others. Each year principals and teachers who remained in at-risk schools were faced with a new group of beginning teachers and, in many cases, substitute teachers when vacancies could not be filled with licensed teachers. CCSD’s resources were not great enough to work with new hires, continue to build capacity among second and third year teachers, and support and maintain veteran teachers.

²Clark County School District Website. www.ccsd.net

³Schools are ranked and labeled at risk on the basis of the following factors: number of students receiving Free and Reduced Price Lunches; rate of student transience; school size; number of English Language Learner students; number of students not meeting proficiency in math and reading tests. If there are limited special resources they are distributed as far down the list as is possible.

⁴Martha Young, Research Consultant, “CCSD 2004-2005 Attrition Study” (2006). Prepared for CCSD Human Resources Division, Las Vegas, NV, p. 28. Cited as “CCSD 2004-05 Attrition Study, 2006”.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Change was imperative—Clark County schools could not continue as they were. Improving teacher quality, dealing with teacher turnover, and assuring the equitable distribution of effective teachers across all parts of the district called for the creation of a new partnership between the district administration and the local education association, the Clark County Education Association (CCEA). Without their working together to overcome past difficulties, change would not have been possible.

During the period 1995-2001, the relationship between the union and the district had been turbulent and divisive. Contract negotiations had come to a standstill in each of the four bargaining years within this time frame. Critical educational issues had to be resolved by arbitration and were decided by a non-educator. In 1997, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service attempted to mediate one of the contract negotiations' impasses. The situation was so strained that the federal mediator assigned to Las Vegas commented to the parties that their relationship was in such a state of disarray that it was preventing them from reaching an amicable agreement.⁵

Under these strained circumstances there was little innovation or positive movement to improve student achievement. The belief that negotiations were not conducted in good faith left teachers feeling that the Board of Trustees did not care about them or their students' needs. The negative atmosphere was obvious to everyone, including the press. The CCEA President reported annually to the Board of School Trustees on the results of a CCEA survey of union members. The survey included members' perceptions of the effectiveness of school leadership and other working conditions. The CCEA survey identified the "worst schools and worst principals." The results were published in the newspaper, clearly inflaming and demoralizing all involved.

Everyone was dissatisfied with the lack of clear direction and the turbulent and hostile environment. Lengthy contract negotiations that ended in arbitration left CCEA with a three-year backlog of unresolved grievances and arbitrations, contract disputes, and contested performance issues. Simultaneously, CCEA had a dramatic loss of support—membership dropped by 1,700 members in two years.

The Board of School Trustees was also frustrated. It had begun to try a new approach for management, using the Carver Strategy of Policy Governance, which moved them beyond a focus on day-to day operations and focused instead on mission, goals, and expectations for the superintendent. But difficult contract negotiations consumed their attention, and stood in the way of fully implementing the new management goals. In 2000, a new superintendent had been appointed who reorganized the district into five regions with up to 60,000 students in each region. The federal government was demanding adequate yearly progress, and the superintendent and regional superintendents were demanding that schools meet their targets for increased student achievement. And, through it all, between 12,000 and 13,000 additional students continued to enter the district each year.

A new CCSD Chief Negotiator was appointed during the 2002-2003 school year. And, with the support of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the district and the union agreed to adopt Interest Based Bargaining as the tool for collaboration and were trained in its use. The Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) process became the "missing link" between CCSD and CCEA. (See box on page five)

Interest Based Bargaining is a process that enables negotiators to become joint problem solvers. It assumes that when both parties focus on solutions, which satisfy mutual interests (including needs, desires, concerns, or fears), the result is more durable and more satisfying to all parties.

Trust and respect on both sides is critical. Both sides must be forthcoming with relevant information, and willing to share their reasons for believing a particular issue is important. It

⁵LaVonne Ritter, Commissioner of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Las Vegas, after an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the contract negotiations in 2001. Personal communication. September 23, 2007.

is much more demanding than adversarial negotiations because it requires that all members of the teams be involved in the training, and that all remain involved in the search for creative solutions which will address the interests of both parties.

Through the IBB process, CCSD and CCEA were able to address a range of key issues during negotiations, including working conditions in all schools, incentives for teachers in at-risk schools, incentives to bring special education teachers back from regular education positions, support for new teachers, and increased salaries for all teachers. The local administrators' association and CCSD went on to use IBB in contract negotiations to change the administrative salary schedule and attract strong, effective principals to the most challenging schools. IBB has also been widely accepted by the Board of School Trustees. It has made it possible for the Trustees to focus on creating a vision and implementing policies to support that vision instead of being embroiled in labor disputes. As the IBB process is implemented, the collaborative atmosphere makes it difficult for an observer to identify to which team — CCSD or CCEA— each participant belongs.

The CCEA and the CCSD concurred that change was necessary because, as John Jasek, Executive Director of CCEA put it, “arbitration became the culture of negotiations.”⁶ IBB helped bring about needed change. “IBB didn’t change the environment – it became a tool as the environment was changing.”⁷ The positive change that resulted was recognized by all involved. Sheila Moulton, a member of the Board of School Trustees in Clark County said that after implementing IBB, “the Board can focus on policy and vision, on getting resources. Teachers can do what they do best, and Board members can do what they do best.”⁸

Four-year contracts now exist, giving financial and labor stability to the CCSD and CCEA. An unforeseen benefit of the new spirit of collaboration was increasing CCSD’s bond rating, which has been especially important in a district that has had to build from 8 to 18 new schools every year since 1990.



The Power of Collaboration: Interest Based Bargaining

To make the difference between interest-based bargaining and adversarial bargaining concrete, the following example uses a tangible object as the focus of negotiations.

Assume there is one orange and four people who want it. In adversarial bargaining, there would be heated discussions of rights and expectations, each side clamoring for the orange, demanding that the other side give in. Each party becomes more and more tied to its position, demanding concessions or surrender from the other. The result would likely require arbitration by an “impartial” arbitrator. The arbitrator would listen to the presentations of both sides and award the orange to one of the parties. One side would win; the other would lose. Only one party’s goals and needs would be met, and there would be no basis for doing anything differently the next time.

In contrast, Interest Based Bargaining begins with the questions, “What are the interests or issues that are important to each party?” and “Why are those issues important?” The parties become joint problem solvers, searching together for workable solutions, which will meet the needs, satisfy the desires, address the concerns, or allay the fears of each party.

If four people want the orange, the first question would be, “Why is having the orange important to you?” Perhaps in that discussion they would learn that one person wants the orange to demonstrate his juggling skill to a friend; the second wants the juice for his child; the third wants the seeds to plant; and the fourth wants the inner skin for a fiber-rich snack. Together they would brainstorm possible ways to meet all of their needs and then apply mutually agreed upon criteria for evaluating all possible solutions.

After going through the process, they might decide to give the first person 30 minutes to use the orange to demonstrate his juggling skill; then cut the orange and squeeze the juice out for the second party; give the seeds to the third party; and give the remaining hull of the orange to the fourth party.

In this case, all parties got what they needed. Everyone’s goals were met and they all came away pleased with the outcome as well as the process. Because they all had a positive experience, they could build upon this trust for the next “negotiations” session and follow the same process.

⁶John Jasek, Executive Director, CCEA, Personal Communications, March 2, 2007.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Sheila Moulton, Member, Clark County Board of School Trustees, Personal Communications, March 2, 2007.

THE ELEMENTS AND PROCESS OF COLLABORATION

As a result of the switch to Interest Based Bargaining, the union and district were able to agree upon creative solutions to many problems and issues, which previously had been barriers to reform. Several of these are described below and summarized in the box on page seven.

Grievance Resolution: When the CCSD and CCEA began their collaborative partnership in 2002-03, there was a three-year backlog of grievances and labor arbitrations. CCSD and CCEA spent time and professional energy fighting over the backlog rather than solving the underlying disputes. To address this, an informal dispute resolution process was established along with an expedited hearing process to alleviate most of the pending grievances and arbitrations.

Grievance resolution is now a key aspect of the CCSD and CCEA collaboration—most contract disputes are now resolved before they reach the grievance stage. When CCEA believes CCSD has violated a contract article, it communicates specifics about the alleged violation to the district. CCSD researches the facts and provides evidence to CCEA that there has been no violation, or, if it finds a violation, they correct the situation. If a grievance has been languishing for months or even years, the parties sit down to consider the facts and agree upon a resolution. If a resolution cannot be found, they usually agree to an expedited arbitration process, which involves written evidence only, a limited hearing time, and an oral decision by the arbitrator.

A New Waiver Process: The CCEA and CCSD agreed to a waiver process that makes it possible for teachers to move beyond contractual restrictions if they and their administrators agree and believe these changes will positively impact student achievement. One example of the implementation of the waiver process concerns contract language requiring that teachers' preparation periods must be provided during the students' school day. Teachers in a number of schools sought waivers in order to place the preparation period in the

morning before the beginning of the students' day. This change allowed teachers to collaborate with other teachers at their grade level or with all other like-subject teachers.

As another example, the contract provides for a seven hour 11 minute workday, every day of the school week. A number of schools wanted to have a seven-hour day, and accumulate the 11 minutes each day to be used on a Saturday or after school to work together or engage in professional development. The waiver process allowed teachers to rearrange how they used their contracted time in pursuit of supporting teaching and learning.

Assessing the Work Climate: A critical part of any retention plan requires understanding which teachers leave and why, and what keeps those who stay. Focus groups, led by an outside contractor, were used to explore the reasons teachers had chosen to leave the district. The two main reasons given by exiting teachers were: 1) lack of leadership support and low morale and 2) the high cost of living.

These findings led the CCSD, in partnership with the CCEA, to work with the Center for Teaching Quality to adapt the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey and distribute it online to all teachers in the district in 2006 and 2007. The Executive Director of CCEA and the Associate Superintendent of Human Resources for CCSD went on the district's closed circuit TV together to explain the purpose of the survey and encourage all teachers and administrators to complete it. In both 2006 and 2007, over 8,000 teachers completed the survey, almost 50 percent of the teachers in the district.

Surveying teachers about working conditions was not enough. Teachers wanted solutions to the issues raised in the focus groups and surveys. CCSD and CCEA then created Teaching and Learning Conditions Teams to help schools analyze their survey data and improve teaching and learning conditions in their schools. These teams were taught by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to use Interest Based Problem Solving strategies, a process similar to IBB, designed to focus on the resolution of problems outside the



The Power of Collaboration: Achieving Meaningful Reform in Clark County, Nevada

Clark County is a tremendous example of what can happen when the union and district join forces in the name of student achievement. CCEA and CCSD significantly changed school culture by working together to bring about reforms that supported teachers and improved teaching conditions and student achievement. These reforms include:

- Grievance Resolution:** This key aspect of the CCEA and CCSD collaboration means that most contract disputes are resolved before they reach the grievance stage.
- Waiver Process:** School staff are able to get waivers on many contract provisions, which creates flexibility to improve instruction and student achievement.
- Assessing the Work Climate:** The union /district collaboration led to several systems for evaluating and responding to staff concerns.
- Creating Empowerment Schools:** Functioning as a school design team, principals and teachers in eight schools were given the freedom to make creative use of calendar, staffing, governance, instructional programs, professional development and budget resources. They also designed a “pay for performance” program that was agreed to by CCEA and CCSD.
- Addressing Teacher Isolation:** Over 100 schools in Clark County are actively participating in developing mentoring and support strategies to help new teachers become part of their school.
- Mentoring and Support in the Northeast Region—The Urban Teacher Program:** The collaboration of union and district officials led to significant focus and professional development in the area of the county with the largest percentage of minority and low-income students.
- Mentoring in 95 High Attrition, At-risk Schools:** Mentoring programs were established in these schools thanks to the collaboration of the union and the school district and special state funds made available for this purpose.
- Early Transfer/Early Hiring Provisions for At-Risk Schools:** Principals of at-risk schools are allowed to begin the transfer and new hire periods two months before other schools, giving them an opportunity to build strong staffs.
- Salary Placement for New Teachers with No Experience:** The CCEA and CCSD came together to improve starting salaries for teachers, making the district more attractive to high quality, novice teachers.
- Creation of the Expanded Salary Schedule:** Senior teachers were given financial incentives to achieve advanced degrees, pursue additional course work, and continue working in the district.

bargaining process. In the training, school staffs fleshed out the concerns identified in the surveys. CCSD hopes to support the development of improved teaching and learning and increase teacher retention by understanding and addressing the issues raised by each school.

Creating Empowerment Schools: In the spring of 2006, Empowerment Schools were established. These schools gave teachers and administrators more authority to make decisions directly affecting their students. Four elementary schools have just completed their first year as Empowerment Schools; two were at-risk schools and two were high-performing schools.

Principals and teachers in Empowerment Schools have had an opportunity to become instructional leaders, guides, and team builders. Both CCSD and CCEA have worked to remove mandates not required by state or federal law. This has provided flexibility to the schools in their use of time, calendar, staffing, governance, instructional programs, professional development, and budget resources. Teachers were given additional contractual days and additional minutes per day to work. They could also use the Waiver Process to remove other impediments. One of the innovative components of the Empowerment Schools has been the potential of “pay for performance.” CCSD and CCEA worked together with Dr. Bill Sanders, who created the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment process, to develop a system that was satisfactory to both parties.

At the end of the 2006-07 school year, the approximately 250 teachers in the Clark County Empowerment Schools received between \$250 and \$1,200 in performance pay for “jobs well done.” The decision to award bonuses of between two percent and five percent to all teachers in the four Empowerment Schools was based on the schools’ overall performance.

Student test scores, achieving AYP, parent and student satisfaction surveys and completion of the “Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey” were considered in determining the amount of the award. The CCEA was supportive of these school-wide bonuses, as reflected in this statement by the CCEA President: “The art teacher doesn’t have a test to show they’re accomplishing something in the classroom . . . but

everybody at the school, whether they’re an art teacher or the librarian, has an impact on student performance.”⁹

Empowerment schools appear to be doing what they intended to do—they are empowering students, teachers, parents, and administrators to pursue changes needed to promote and ensure student achievement. As Dr. Karlene McCormick-Lee, Associate Superintendent who oversees the empowerment schools stated, “Student achievement has to be important and that is not negotiable. However, this was an opportunity to demonstrate the other things the district values—climate and working conditions, parent satisfaction, and the quality of the campus management.”¹⁰

Empowerment schools are also viewed with great promise by the state legislature, which has recently mandated increasing the number of empowerment schools to 5% of each district’s total number of schools throughout the state.

Addressing Teacher Isolation: While the empowerment schools have made strides in establishing a norm of faculty collaboration, teacher isolation remains a serious district-wide concern. According to a recent CCSD study, teacher turnover is lowest among teachers who have been prepared in Nevada schools and colleges of education. Unfortunately, Nevada’s higher education institutions have been unable to keep up with the demand. As a consequence, 75 percent of the new hires to CCSD are from out-of-state.¹¹ Today, greater attention is paid to the out-of-state hires, and these newcomers have support from the professional community and the community in general. Over 100 schools are actively participating in developing mentoring and support strategies to help new teachers. Although not a contractual issue, CCSD works with CCEA to address some of the new teachers’ personal needs in such areas as housing, finding jobs for family members, and making connections to groups with similar interests.

Mentoring and Support in the Northeast Region via The Urban Teacher Program (UTP): Clark County’s Northeast Region has a high percent of minority students and serves a large at-risk population. Teacher retention and limited numbers of teachers of color had been major concerns in this region of

⁹Emily Richmond, “Empowerment Teaches Get Little Something Extra,” Las Vegas Sun (August 1, 2007, p. 3)

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹“CCSD 2004-05 Attrition Study, 2006”. p. 55.

the district. The Urban Teacher Program (UTP) was developed to recruit and retain effective teachers in this region, particularly those who reflected the diversity of the student population.

In the first year (2005-06) of the UTP, 167 teachers participated in the program. Teachers who were to begin teaching in one of the schools in the NE region in the fall could attend a five-week Summer Academy. The CCEA agreed that those attending the Summer Academy would move over one column on the salary schedule just as if they had taken 16 credit hours of university classes. Professional Learning Communities were also created at each of the participating NE Region schools. Again, with CCEA support, it was agreed that those new teachers who actively participated in the Professional Learning Communities for the entire school year would move over another column on the salary schedule. Veteran teachers in the NE Region were offered the opportunity to have their fees paid if they sought National Board for Professional Teaching Standards status. This helped mitigate possible tensions between new and veteran teachers.

The Urban Teacher Program also provided a prototype support program for all first year teachers. As a result, mentoring support for new teachers in the region was established, funded in part through a federal earmark (a “set aside” grant) secured by the local Congressman. It specified that each of the schools in the region would have full-time, trained mentors, selected from among current or retired teachers who had demonstrated effectiveness in working in urban, at-risk schools.

After the first year of the UTP, the CCSD commissioned a detailed study to determine patterns of teacher selection and retention. According to the study, *What Makes Teachers Stay, 2006*, there was a steady increase in Asian, Black and Hispanic teachers, with the greatest increase among Hispanic teachers at the elementary school level (a 5.7% increase). (See Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 1)

Attrition patterns among UTP teachers who resigned during or at the end of their first year with CCSD were also analyzed. Data was collected on their age, gender, years of experience

in teaching, the reason for resigning, place of education, and whether they participated in the UTP Summer Academy or the UTP yearlong Professional Learning Communities.

Mentoring in 95 High Attrition, At-risk Schools: In 2005 the State Legislature provided funds for mentoring teachers throughout the state. One important criterion for receiving these funds was the requirement that a plan for the use of the funds had to be negotiated with each county’s teachers’ association and administrators’ association. CCSD and CCEA agreed that the best use of these funds in Clark County would be to pay a stipend to one administrator, one mentor facilitator, and one mentor for every three first or second year teachers in each of the 95 high attrition, high risk schools (named AB 580 schools after the Assembly Bill 580 which created the program) in the other three regions of the district. (The Northeast Region was not included because the UTP program already provided mentoring in all schools in that region.) This jointly agreed upon design was funded with a \$6.5 million grant and led to an expansive mentoring program that achieved positive results: teacher retention increased by almost 19 percent (compared to 10.5 percent for CCSD overall – See Table 4 in Appendix 1); teacher satisfaction increased by more than 10 percent; and between 15 and 20 percent of the schools increased their staff in critical needs areas, specifically math, science and special education.¹²

Data gathered in the “Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey” were examined to determine if the number of teachers from the AB580 schools staying in 2007 increased by 10 percent, the benchmark goal representing increased teacher satisfaction. The data reported significant growth in retention in the 95 schools served by the grant. (See Table 5 in Appendix 1) The data reflects significant retention patterns in the AB580 schools at all levels, with the exception of high school teachers in the NW region. The mentoring programs at the 95 AB580 schools are considered a key reason for improved retention of teachers in these schools.

Without the collaboration between CCSD and CCEA, the mentoring programs would not have been funded and the CCSD

¹²Follow up Report: AB580 Assembly Bill 580: Programs of Performance Pay and Enhanced Compensation for the Recruitment, Retention and Mentoring of Licensed Personnel, 2007.

would have forfeited the funds available to it under AB580.

Transfer/Early Hiring Provisions for At-Risk Schools: A contractual waiver was negotiated by CCEA and CCSD to give at-risk schools an opportunity to begin the transfer period and the new hire assignment period two full months before other schools. Administrators from at-risk schools who agree to serve as out-of-state recruiters can make early offers for CCSD and for their own schools. Almost every administrator in the at-risk schools has accepted this opportunity to recruit directly and fill their school ranks early with teachers of their choice.

Salary Placement for New Teachers with No Experience: Despite the growing economy, the starting salary for new teachers in Clark County remains low, especially given the high cost of living in the area. To address this issue, starting in 2003-2004, inexperienced teachers were allowed to begin on step two of the salary schedule the first year of the agreement and step 3 the second year of the agreement. This allowed CCSD to offer new teachers \$3,000 more for each step than provided by the salary schedule. It also meant that the entire schedule did not have to be increased (in CCSD, a one percent increase in the entire salary schedule would cost over \$9 million). This creative adjustment to the salary scale put CCSD schools on a better footing for recruiting new teachers and was a direct result of the collaborative agreements between the union and the district.

Creation of the Expanded Salary Schedule: As the district reviewed turnover data, they found that more teachers left CCSD in the ninth year than at any other point after years one through five. This may have been due to the fact that the salary schedule “topped out” after 14 years of service and a doctorate or Masters plus 32 credits. The parties agreed to add increases for years 15 and 16 to the salary schedule by adding a new column beyond the Masters plus 32 levels. Teachers could attain this level by enrolling in university or college courses specially designed and approved by CCSD through the Center for Teaching Excellence. This innovation was again the result of the collaborative efforts between CCSD and CCEA.

¹³“No Child Left Behind” *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (July 29, 2007, p. 12B).

¹⁴Ibid.

OUTCOMES OF COLLABORATION

The positive spirit of collaboration that led to the improvements cited in the sections above has infused the district as a whole. The greater community, and the media, have taken note, and report on the school improvements with great pride. As an example, in the summer of 2007, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (the major city newspaper) sponsored a full-page acknowledgement of CCSD’s recent achievements. “Congratulations to Clark County School District. The CCSD as a district met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) this year.”¹³ The article noted the following achievements:

- The number of schools meeting AYP increased by 12 percent (from 183 in 2005 to 216 in 2006);
- The number of schools not meeting AYP decreased (from 149 in 2005 to 123 in 2006);
- An increase (as high as 14 percent) in proficiency in math and reading in every grade from 3rd to 8th;
- A greater percent of high school graduates passed the Nevada High School Math Proficiency exam, moving from 86.9 percent in 2005 to 88.4 percent in 2006;
- A decrease in the drop out rate for 9th-12th grade students has been reflected in the past three years (from 7.6 percent in 2004 to 5.9 percent in 2006);
- Of the 11,642 students who graduated from CCSD schools, 2,373 earned advanced diplomas and 2,103 honors diplomas were awarded;
- More than \$108 million was awarded in scholarships to 2006 CCSD graduates compared to \$97.5 million in 2005;
- In 2006, 11 CCSD schools were designated “exemplary” compared to six in 2005; and
- The number of “high achieving” schools increased from 34 in 2005 to 44 in 2006.¹⁴

It seems clear from first year data that CCSD has met a major goal of its reform effort: to increase student achievement and maintain consistent gains in student performance. These achievements are the direct result of a combined commitment to excellence, which has been wholly supported by the CCEA and CCSD collaborative.

HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

IN THE BEGINNING... THE HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF COLLABORATION

Once known as the “Pittsburgh of the South,” Chattanooga was suffering the fate of many other industrial cities in the 1990s. A declining industrial base created unemployment, a decaying urban core and a stagnant economy. Schools were a casualty of this decline. With a high percentage of poor and largely minority students, the city schools had been effectively neglected for years. In 1996, determining that its tax base could no longer pay for the school system, the City of Chattanooga took a decisive step. They would no longer have a city school system. In 1998, after a citywide vote, Chattanooga turned over its schools to surrounding Hamilton County.

Despite the fact that they were contiguous and about the same size—with 19,755 students in the City of Chattanooga district and 23,444 students in the Hamilton County district¹⁵ - the student demographics and achievement levels were markedly different in the two systems. (See Tables 6 and 7 in Appendix 1 for comparison charts):

- 4.1% of students in Hamilton County were African American compared to 62.9% in Chattanooga;
- 6.5% of Hamilton County schools participated in the Title I program compared to 30.8% in Chattanooga. Of these, 92.3% of Hamilton County Title I schools were meeting expectations compared to 20% of those in Chattanooga;
- 19.9% of students in Hamilton County were eligible for free and reduced lunch compared to 59% in Chattanooga.

And while many Hamilton County residents worked in the city, they lived outside of the city and paid no taxes to support the city’s functions. Many in the county believed merging the two school districts would “bring down” the county system. How could two such different districts, with such negative barriers in attitude, be successfully merged?

The two teacher unions, the Chattanooga Education Association (CEA) and Hamilton County Education Association (both NEA affiliates), began working on a plan to merge their associations one year prior to the merger of the two school systems. With the help of the statewide Tennessee Education Association, committees were formed to oversee an officer transition plan, the purchase of new office space and disposal of property, and a new constitution to serve what would become the “new” HCEA.

Of concern was the issue of communications (or lack thereof) in each of the merging systems. For several years, Chattanooga Education Association leaders had worked collaboratively with their school administrators in a negotiations process perfected by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. A “System-Wide Action Team,” made up of CEA officers and central office personnel, met regularly to iron out personnel disputes and other concerns. In contrast, the county school system conducted adversarial bargaining and relations between the union and school board were rancorous.

In 1997 a new superintendent was hired for the soon-to-be merged districts. He immediately faced difficulties including conflicts between existing policies and differences in negotiated contract language across the two systems. Questions around central office staffing, budgets, attendance boundaries, transportation issues, and others also had to be resolved.

In 1998 the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) officially became the central administration for the merged district. The superintendent attempted to create an equal number of central office administrative positions from each of the original districts, and negotiated on other potentially contentious merger issues. Each of the two systems had its own administration building, for example, but only one would be needed going forward. This was resolved by selling one building, turning the remaining building into a professional development facility, and housing the central administration in a building provided by the County Commission.

¹⁵Tennessee Department of Education 21st Century Report Card. www.k-12.state.tn.us/arc/rptcrd97/index.html

The budget was also an issue. Previously, the City of Chattanooga provided \$8 million annually for the operation of the schools and had agreed to continue to do so in the short term. After the mayoral and city council election, however, the city determined it would no longer provide financial support for the new district, requiring the State and the County Commission to fill the funding gap.

During the first two years, the new superintendent faced the challenge of creating a way to develop a common vision of reform, and of building shared trust around academic, administrative, and financial matters. But there was little progress. Teachers reported chaos in the City's lowest achieving elementary schools. The most effective teachers left these schools and transferred to those with higher achievement levels, while the newest and least-experienced teachers were often placed in the high need, low performing schools. Some of the low performing schools went without a full teaching staff until several weeks into the school year. In this unstable setting of high teacher turnover, administrators were unable to build capacity, teachers felt isolated, and morale was at an all-time low.

A Tennessee Institute of Public Policy Report (2000) confirmed that the schools were among the worst in the state: nine of the lowest performing elementary schools in the State of Tennessee were located in Hamilton County—specifically, within the borders of the City of Chattanooga.

The educational disarray impacted the local economy as well. If it was to move beyond the outdated heavy metal industrial base necessary to revitalize the area's economy, Chattanooga needed strong schools.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

The superintendent recognized that the union leadership had to be supportive of the reform plan in order to rally their members to improve teaching and learning. He approached the newly merged HCEA and asked them to work with the district to focus on the low performing schools as the immediate target of reform. The union agreed.

While agreement was a first major step, recent history presented major challenges to collaboration between the union and the district. Two years prior to the merger, the original Hamilton County Education Association and Hamilton County Department of Education had been involved in contentious, negative labor negotiations. At the core of the problem was an interpretation, by the school board's attorney, of a law that the superintendent had the legal authority to ignore existing contract language governing teacher transfers. The union's position was that the contract language still governed transfers. Angry local teachers and representatives from both the state and national association leadership held rallies and picketed school board meetings. The Tennessee Education Association successfully lobbied the legislature for an amendment to the law, which would clarify whether the superintendent had the authority to supercede the existing contract provision on transfers.

It was at this point that the HCEA Executive Uniserv Director suggested that they consider Interest Based Bargaining (see box on page five). She was familiar with IBB and hoped it might offer an opportunity to get beyond the current impasse, and begin to heal the strained relationship between the district and union. All parties agreed and joint training was arranged. HCEA was impressed with HCDE's commitment to finding a better way to work together, demonstrated by the fact that the superintendent attended every training session.

Concerned by the dismal performance of the low performing elementary schools in the district, but encouraged by the new spirit of collaboration beginning to emerge between the HCEA and the HCED, Chattanooga's Benwood Foundation decided to

undertake its first major systemic grant making effort and focus on the nine lowest performing schools in Hamilton County.¹⁶ Working with Chattanooga's well-respected local education fund, the Public Education Foundation (PEF) and HCDE, they analyzed student achievement data and compiled teacher profiles for all nine schools. HCDE and PEF interviewed 60 teachers from these low-performing schools as well as every principal, several dozen parents and the fifth graders in three of the schools. They also conducted focus groups with the community. HCDE and PEF presented a comprehensive plan for reform of the nine schools to the Benwood Foundation based on all of the data collected.

Local leaders interested in working on improving the schools were afforded a unique and ultimately critical opportunity to move forward. In 2000, the National Education Association (NEA) invited HCEA leadership to bring a team of stakeholders, including the superintendent and members of his cabinet and the president of PEF, to the NEA's annual "Challenge of Change" Conference in Colorado Springs, Colorado. This event provided a venue for representatives of the union, district, and business leadership, to work together away from their individual constituencies, better understand the challenges each faced and begin to establish mutual respect and trust. Discussions during the weeklong conference ultimately became the basis for the district's first strategic plan. Specific issues discussed included transfer policies, reconstitution of both teaching and administrative staff in the lowest-performing schools, rezoning, and the lack of quality professional development.

During that retreat, the superintendent presented the concept (first suggested by the Mayor) of rewarding faculty with bonuses for increasing student achievement. The Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS) data provided a compelling argument in support of these bonuses, by documenting the devastating impact on students' long-term success that resulted from assigning them to ineffective teachers several years in a row. The HCEA agreed to these bonuses, despite previous opposition, contingent upon what would be an almost six percent pay increase for all teachers.

¹⁶Shortly before the project began, one of the schools was closed. As a result, the Benwood Initiative involved eight, not nine, low performing elementary schools.

The HCEA also agreed to a plan to reconstitute the faculties at the schools on which the Benwood Foundation was focusing (these came to be known as the Benwood schools). The union recognized that reconstituting the teaching staff was critical to improving these schools. In turn, the district guaranteed the HCEA that any teacher who was asked to leave a Benwood school would be assured a place at another school in the district.

The HCEA also agreed to publicly support the school board and district administration in funding issues, another departure from past history. The result of the weeklong, facilitated retreat was a commitment to stand together to educate HCEA members about the changes and to join hands in bringing the community and elected leaders along. These were critical first steps in building a strategic plan for the future and in defining the roles for their continuing collaboration.

HCEA has continued to support reform efforts and has worked to ensure that those efforts include the collective wisdom of the district's 3,100 teachers. The HCEA regularly communicates with its members regarding the reasons for various initiatives, and their results. Actively involved in joint planning sessions, the union representatives work closely with district leadership to keep the focus on reform, tackling and solving problems together as they arise.

The relationship between the HCEA and HCDE has continued to grow and their partnership has been fortified by a community-wide collaboration that includes not only the Benwood Foundation and PEF, but also the NEA and a range of other foundations and community groups. The union representatives serve on Foundation steering committees and work with PEF support to provide professional development for teachers who serve as HCEA representatives. One example of the innovative programs crafted with union/district/foundation collaboration is the Intensive Assistance program, which puts marginal and low-performing teachers on notice, with HCEA representatives serving as active members of the teams that assist and support these teachers.

The box on page 14 provides a snapshot of some of the major partners working together in supporting systemic reform in Hamilton County.



The Power of Collaboration: The Key Players in Hamilton County, Tennessee

PARTNER	ROLE	FOCUS & ACTIVITIES
Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE)	Oversaw the merger of two the districts; responsible for administering schools in the newly combined district.	Began with a focus on high poverty schools. Converted 14 central office positions and used district and federal funds to create 38 school-level positions. Focused upon recruiting and retaining effective teachers, and involving the community and parents
Hamilton County Education Association (HCEA)	Newly merged bargaining unit created out of the two existing teachers' associations in the year before district merger took place; represents teachers and administrators.	Brought Interest Based Bargaining as vehicle for negotiating all contractual issues. Acts as a full partner in the continuing reform efforts.
Benwood Foundation	Local private foundation committed to the academic achievement of the children in the eight lowest performing elementary schools in the City of Chattanooga.	"Adopted" the eight lowest performing elementary schools in City of Chattanooga. These schools became known as the "Benwood Schools" due to their support—\$5 million over five years. PEF raised another \$1.5 million for the initiative. The goal was to ensure all 3rd graders in "Benwood Schools" would read at or above grade level within five years. Extended the grant an additional year in 2006-2007 and in July 2007 announced funding totaling \$7.3 million for these schools plus eight additional elementary schools.
Carnegie Corporation of New York	Schools for a New Society grant focused on high school reform	In 2000 provided Hamilton Co. with a planning grant for the high school reform initiative. In 2001 provided \$8 million grant over 5-year period to improve all high schools. PEF matched this with \$6 million over same period.
Chattanooga Business Education Round Table	Since 2001 provided financial support for reforms	Funding activities included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Funds to recognize and reward high performing teachers in designated low performing schools through group and individual bonuses for growth in student achievement in the Benwood schools. ■ Provided limited free legal services to teachers. ■ Provided up to \$10,000 financial assistance for purchase of a home in the urban neighborhoods.
Lyndhurst Foundation	Local foundation dedicated to revitalization of Chattanooga area. Funding expanded middle school reform to cover all middle schools in Hamilton Co.	Original focus was conservation, environment and private schools, but joined with partnership to focus on improving student achievement in the remaining middle schools. \$6 million grant expanded NEA Foundation middle school reform effort to all 21 middle schools in Hamilton County.

PARTNER	ROLE	FOCUS & ACTIVITIES
NEA Foundation	Through “Closing the Achievement Gaps” grant program, supports union/district partnerships to accelerate the achievement rate for disadvantaged and minority students, while raising achievement for all students. Hamilton County was the first recipient of these grants.	At end of 2003, provided \$2.5 million grant to HCDE and HCEA to collaborate to eradicate achievement gaps in five lowest performing middle schools. This grant, along with positive spirit of union and district collaboration, was leveraged with other funding support to allow reform efforts that impact all middle schools.
Osborne Foundation	Working with the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, created free Masters Degree program for Benwood teachers.	Joined collaborative in 2001. Osborne program has since been expanded to include teachers from five NEA Foundation middle schools. Additional funding from the NEA Foundation, PEF, HCDE, and the BellSouth Foundation also support this program.
Public Education Foundation	Local nonprofit, served as umbrella group for reform efforts.	Catalyst for change in all of the reform efforts. Raised funds from local and national foundations; provided professional development; served as funding agent over-seeing external funding; facilitated collaboration and meetings of all partners.
Tennessee Education Association	Worked with Teachers Association units in Chattanooga and Hamilton County to create one affiliate in the year before the merger.	Helped the two associations write a common constitution, bylaws, policies, and procedures for the merged organization that were presented for ratification by their memberships. Worked with the associations to have a City teacher serve as president the first year and a County teacher as president the second year. After that time, the officers were chosen by a vote of the joint membership.

THE ELEMENTS AND PROCESS OF COLLABORATION

When the reform process began, the obstacles included an underdeveloped and inexperienced teacher force; inexperienced and understaffed school and central office leadership teams; lack of clear focus; limited and inaccessible data; low levels of parental involvement and community support; and inadequate public funding. In the past these would have been insurmountable obstacles, but with the union/district collaboration and the community-wide partnership, improvement at all levels—elementary, middle and high school—became possible.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The 2000 report of the Tennessee Institute of Public Policy, showing that nine of the lowest performing elementary schools in the state were concentrated in Chattanooga, served

as a call to action. These “Benwood schools” were the focus of the first round of reform, and improving teaching quality was the key. The HCEA and the HCDE reached out to the Benwood teachers through focus groups, canvassing, and public relations activities to determine what they believed were the greatest impediments to student success, and to seek their input on what changes, resources and incentives were needed to overcome existing obstacles and improve teacher satisfaction and retention.

Teacher transfer process: Using Interest Based Bargaining, (see box on page five) the HCDE and HCEA negotiated a successful review of contract revisions and resolved a number of highly charged issues including the teacher transfer process. Under the old contract a school vacancy had to be internally advertised for three weeks before a transferring teacher could fill it. The vacancy created when this teacher transferred

would then require another three-week advertising period. This process continued on and on until no more teachers were applying for positions internally. Only then could principals go outside the system to recruit new hires for remaining vacancies. By that time, most of the best new candidates had accepted other offers. This “seniority-driven domino effect” often left high needs schools with un-staffed classrooms for several weeks into the school year.¹⁷

To solve this problem, the HCEA and HCDE agreed on a process in which teachers had to declare their intention to leave in February and indicate up to five choices of schools to which they would like to transfer. This process created greater stability for the whole system, especially the high-need schools, enabling the district to hire new teachers much sooner, and principals to select candidates well suited for their schools.¹⁸

Teacher learning and school-wide communities of support:

Professional development became “embedded” in the teacher workday and time was made during the day to collaborate and focus on teaching and learning. The superintendent also converted 14 central office curriculum positions into school-level positions and, with additional district and federal funds, created 38 school-based instructional support positions. These school-based positions are in every school and include: Consulting Teachers—master teachers who provide instructional assistance (demonstration lessons, lesson planning, and non-evaluative observations) to all teachers; Literacy Coaches who work with students individually or in small groups; and Family Partnership Specialists who work with parents and the community.

Administrators and Teacher Leaders work together focusing on ways to teach literacy, work with adults, facilitate change, create and nurture a positive and cooperative school culture, and facilitate teamwork. Each of the Benwood schools also formed a Leadership Team, which includes teachers, parents and older students, to provide input on scheduling, curriculum, budgets, professional development, and ways to increase parent involvement.

The Public Education Foundation has also provided tremendous support to the Benwood schools, which has included:

- Training the Family Partnership Specialists.

- Recruiting two Leadership Coaches to provide in-school coaching on the effective use of data, and systems management.
- Sponsoring a Data Analyst to provide relevant and understandable data to educators and parents throughout the district (K-12) and provide professional development to principals, change coaches in secondary schools, and the literacy coaches to better understand and analyze data.
- Providing Resident National Trainers who spend up to 20 days per year in each Benwood school modeling lessons and observing and coaching Benwood teachers on implementing specific strategies to improve instruction.
- Hosting a two-day learning exchange for Benwood faculties featuring nationally known speakers on topics such as urban culture and urban learning, literacy, differentiated instruction and effective use of data.

The Osborne Foundation made it possible for Benwood teachers to participate in a master’s degree program, specializing in teaching in an urban environment, through the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga. In return, these “Osborne Fellows” agree to remain in their school for four years after receiving their master’s degree. The program includes opportunities to visit school districts around the country that have initiated successful reforms in urban environments. University professors teach the classes, and master teachers from HCDE lead weekly follow-up discussion groups. The last cohort enters its second and final year during the 2007-2008 school year.

Pay incentives: The HCEA agreed to pay incentives for high-performing teachers and administrators only if there was an objective measure for determining these incentives. They agreed that high performing teachers would be identified in one of two ways:

1. For the 4th and 5th grades, high performing teachers are those who have achieved a year average TVAAS score of 115+ on the achievement test. (A score of 100 indicates that a teacher’s class has made a full year’s progress in learning in one year.)

¹⁷Lessons Learned: A Report on the Benwood Initiative. Public Education Foundation. www.pefchattanooga.org, p. 5.

¹⁸Ibid, p. 6.

2. For K-3 teachers and specialists, for whom there is no TVAAS, a committee evaluates high performing status based upon student pre- and post-tests, a skills checklist, teacher portfolios, and an interview.

In Benwood Schools that achieve an overall average minimum TVAAS score of 115, every teacher in the school receives a \$1,000 salary bonus. Principals of those schools receive a salary bonus of \$10,000 and assistant principals, \$5,000. Individual teachers may also earn an annual salary bonus of \$5,000 if they have a three-year TVAAS average score of 115+ or with the recommendation by the K-3 evaluation committee.

The \$5,000 individual salary bonus was used as a tool to recruit teachers with records of high performance and to retain high performing teachers in the Benwood Schools. These pay incentives are now offered to faculties in any school “On Notice” under No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Teachers who agree to work in the high needs areas could receive additional incentives. The Chattanooga Business Education Round Table and the business community also raised money to reward and recognize high performing teachers, offering free legal service, and providing a maximum of \$10,000 in financial assistance for the purchase of a home in an urban neighborhood.

The Benwood Foundation, the original catalyst for change at the elementary level, continues to be a major supporter of reform, and in July 2007 announced it will invest \$7.3 million to support eight additional schools, while maintaining support for the original Benwood schools.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Although work began with the elementary schools, reform was needed throughout all of the Hamilton County Schools. In the spring of 2000, the Carnegie Corporation of New York (Carnegie) awarded Hamilton County a planning grant for high school reform. The grant encouraged every high school principal, teacher and student in Hamilton County to engage in conversations about how to build an outstanding high school.

In focus groups held throughout the county more than 1,000 parents and community leaders offered ideas and advice. The union was a major participant in these discussions and provided a letter of support for the Carnegie proposal. Using the ideas of the participants, information from national experts, trips to high-performing high schools throughout the country and additional research, teams at each of the 17 high schools prepared plans to transform their high school into a high-performing institution that would provide a quality education for all students.

A Partnership/Leadership Team made up of representatives from HCDE and PEF, together with a number of community leaders, including the mayor of Chattanooga, oversaw the yearlong planning process. Backed by the strong unified support of the union and district leadership, PEF agreed to serve as the fiscal agent for the Carnegie grant and provided a \$6 million match (representing almost one-half of its assets) to the Carnegie funds. As a result of this work, in 2001 Carnegie awarded Hamilton County a five-year, \$8 million grant to reform all the districts’ high schools.

Hamilton County’s high schools were highly diverse by size, location (urban, suburban, rural), design (magnet, neighborhood), race, ethnicity and family income level. The partners recognized that a system-wide vision and set of goals was necessary to unite efforts and best serve all constituents, yet each high school would need to engage in site-based planning to create its own plan for meeting these goals. A “single path curriculum” was implemented, requiring all high school students to complete four math courses, four science courses, two years of a foreign language and a senior project or service learning experiences. Additionally, the grant established four key goals that would need to be a part of each school plan: personalization of instruction and ensuring that each student is well know by several adults; flexibility in meeting all student needs; establishment of learning communities; and rigor and relevance within all courses.

The superintendent made substantial commitments of human and financial resources. He replaced 12 of the 17 principals—each time appointing a stronger instructional leader. The

superintendent used a federal magnet school grant to double the number of high schools open to all county students, creating a school focused on technology and another focused on performing arts. He eliminated central office positions and pooled the funds with others to hire 27 consulting teachers to coach teachers full time. A Change Leadership Group, consisting of the leaders from HCDE (the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent for Secondary and the Director of High Schools), three members from PEF, and a representative from HCEA, was created to monitor progress. PEF has played a critical role by assisting the HCDE in planning and in conducting professional development.

The State Commissioner of Education supported this reform effort by granting special waivers that freed the HCDE high schools of administrative regulations that were barriers to change. Waivers were given that enabled HCDE to increase graduation requirements and give credit for special high school courses.

The plan encouraged each high school to develop at least one academy or small school within a school, with a special academic focus. As of 2007, HCDE now offers 29 different academies in all 17 high schools, which include 9th Grade Success Academies, a Health and Family Consumer Sciences Academy, a World Interest Leadership Development Academy, a Technology Enterprise & Communications Academy, Residential Construction Academies and Engineering Technology Academies, and many others.

Change Coaches were hired to work with the academy administrators. There was concern that these positions would be eliminated at the end of the 2006-2007 school year when the Carnegie grant ended. However, in the summer of 2007 the Tennessee State Legislature made additional funding available to urban school districts and HCDE used a portion of that money to retain their Change Coaches. In addition, the Change Coaches in high schools that are part of a middle school/high school configuration will continue to be maintained through the NEA Foundation/Lyndhurst Foundation funding.

Collaboration and partnership building remain at the heart of reform efforts. Two “vertical” learning communities, composed of all schools in the feeder pattern of two high schools, were

established to ensure that every child entering kindergarten will graduate from high school with his or her classmates. “Horizontal” networks have also been set up to build capacity among role-alike groups, such as among Change Coaches, literacy leaders, assistant principals, and guidance counselors.

The same team of outside evaluators that works with the Benwood project also guides the evaluation of the high school reform initiatives. They visit each school once a year with a team of eight-10 HCDE leaders. Participation in these teams provides training opportunities for assistant principals and teacher leaders. HCDE and PEF identify a focus to be considered at each school and the high school leadership team may also ask the team to look at particular areas during their visit. The evaluators then give feedback to the school's leadership team. In addition to the evaluation team's feedback, schools receive information annually from focus groups conducted with parents, teachers, and students.

MIDDLE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

As Hamilton County's elementary and high school initiatives moved forward, the partners were acutely aware of the lack of school reform in the middle grades. The successful track record of existing reform initiatives made it possible for the school system to attract another key player to the partnership. In late 2003, the NEA Foundation invited the HCDE and HCEA to apply for a competitive grant to close achievement gaps district-wide. The grant would focus on the missing link to system-wide reform: middle school improvements.

HCDE and HCEA were invited to compete for this award in large part due to their demonstrated success in working together, as well as for their positive relationships with other stakeholders in the Benwood and the Carnegie initiatives. The proposal submitted in January 2004 set as its goals:

- All 8th graders would read at grade level;
- All students would take rigorous courses, including algebra and science; and
- Teachers in the targeted, high need schools would mirror

the profile of others in the district in terms of years of experience and academic credentials.

The five year \$2.5 million grant the NEA Foundation awarded to HCEA/HCDE in June 2004 made it possible to address the needs of the five lowest performing middle schools. In 2005, after seeing data indicating the impressive gains that these five schools had registered, the Lyndhurst Foundation challenged the district to develop a plan for extending these reform efforts to all the middle schools. Based on this plan, the Lyndhurst Foundation joined the partnership in 2006, bringing an additional \$6 million to the effort over a four-year period. The NEA Foundation and Lyndhurst Foundation support led to the Middle Schools for a New Society (MSNS) initiative—a district wide effort to close achievement gaps in all 21 middle schools. The funds from NEA Foundation were leveraged even further when the Osborne Foundation agreed to allow teachers in the five NEA Foundation middle schools to be participants in the Osborne Fellows program.

The expanded partnership and funds made it possible to enhance their goals and set new benchmarks for all of the middle schools:

- All students (grades 6 through 8) would read at or above grade level;
- All students would perform at or above grade level in math; and
- The number of students rated as “advanced” in reading and math would increase by 5 percent annually. All schools would receive Value Added scores of A in reading and math. Additional goals included addressing transitional needs of students to increase promotion rates and student achievement.

Reform measures that had proven effective at the elementary and high school levels were adopted with the support of the NEA Foundation grant. Leadership teams were created and developed individual school action plans to meet students’ needs. Change Coaches were put in place in the middle schools. The NEA Foundation grant also supports compensa-

tion to Consulting Teachers and Grade Level Chairs trained during the summer and the school year. PEF supports a Literacy Leaders Network made up of middle and high school teachers—both literacy coaches and classroom teachers—who want to develop their strategies for addressing literacy issues in their schools. A PEF supported Data Analyst plays a key role in assisting school teams in modeling how data can be used to inform instruction and then be presented to teachers and parents. To help build better communications with parents, many of whom previously felt unwelcome by the schools, the grant paid for School-based Family Partnership Specialists who encourage family involvement in the target schools.

The HCDE and PEF also provide opportunities for administrators to learn from each other. The middle school principals meet with high school principals to consider what it means to provide students with a relevant and rigorous curriculum and to share what they are learning. They also meet with the Change Coaches to focus on shared leadership, monitoring progress, using formative assessments, and using data to inform practice. The Principals’ Network, which includes all of the middle school principals (there are also networks of elementary principals and of high school principals), works with the union and PEF staff to focus exclusively on instruction and student achievement. They also examine ACT standards for middle schools to align them with the state standards. These standards are measured on ACT’s EXPLORE test for 8th graders, and ACT’s PLAN test for 10th graders.¹⁹ In May 2007, middle schools participated in the “STEP BACK” process, in which teams of principals and teachers from one school serve as critical friends to examine and critique each other’s 2007-2008 school improvement plans.

A standing Change Leadership Group made up of district, PEF, and union leaders meets regularly to ensure that the wide variety of middle school strategies are moving to accomplish each of the reform goals. Emphasis is placed on the fundamental goal of providing every student in every school with a high quality education that prepares them for a rigorous high school curriculum.

¹⁹ACT is a nationally standardized college-readiness test.



The Power of Collaboration: Snapshot of School Reform in Hamilton County, Tennessee

Hamilton County has achieved district wide reforms that improved teaching and learning. These gains were a direct result of the collaboration between the union and the school district and the community-wide partnership that developed to support their work.

- Teacher transfers became more efficient and more supportive of staffing all schools with good teachers, particularly those with a history of low levels of student achievement.
- Pay incentives were implemented to award high-performing teachers and schools.
- Site-based school planning was implemented to support systemic goals, with school leadership teams throughout the district.
- Waivers were granted to allow flexibility at the school level to meet the needs of students.
- Central office positions were eliminated and funds were used to create school-based positions to support teaching and learning.
- Change Coaches were put into place in all middle and high schools.
- Teams were developed across grade levels and within role-alike groups to support teaching and learning.
- Principal networks have been established at each educational level within the district, elementary, middle and high school.
- Family support specialists serve as a liaison between middle schools and families.
- Small learning communities were developed in all high schools.
- High school curricular and graduation requirements were increased for all students.
- A "vertical team" that includes a high school and all of the elementary and middle schools that feed into it, has been established in one feeder alignment to ensure every kindergarten student graduates from high school with his or her classmates.
- Analysis and use of data to support instruction is a norm throughout the district and is supported by analysts whose job it is to support administrators, teachers and families as they seek to understand and effectively use data.
- Evaluation was built into reform, with feedback from all stakeholders collected and valued.

OUTCOMES OF COLLABORATION

Working together to focus initially on the needs of the most struggling schools, the union and district in Hamilton County came together to make a difference district wide. This partnership formed a solid base that inspired confidence in local and national funders who were then willing to invest time, funding, and human capacity to achieve results.

ELEMENTARY OUTCOMES

Schools have improved throughout the district, but truly impressive gains were made in the schools that were most at risk at the start of the reform effort. In 1999, 12 percent of 3rd grade students in the Benwood schools were reading at proficient or advanced levels. By 2003, more than half (53 percent) achieved this level and by 2006, almost three-quarters (73 percent) had reached this goal. Student scores for reading and language arts scores showed equally impressive gains at the fifth grade level. (See Table 8 in Appendix 1)

Additionally, the number of Benwood schools achieving an "A" on the TVAAS, which represents "exceptional gains in student achievement," rose dramatically from 2001 to 2006. In math and social studies, over a 3-year period, all eight schools earned an "A" on the value-added assessments. Science was the weakest area but even here six of the eight schools earned the grade "A." (See Table 9 in Appendix 1)

Greater stability and stronger teaching skills among staff in the Benwood schools were critical factors in student achievement gains. In 2002, the first year in which the union agreed to "reconstitution" of struggling schools and bonuses to attract and retain teachers at these schools, the number of teachers new to their schools reached an all-time high of 31.4 percent. By 2005 that number had dropped to 17.9 percent. (See Table 10 in Appendix 1) With reduced teacher turnover and improved ability to attract veteran teachers from non-Benwood schools, the number of novice teachers declined.

Teachers in Benwood schools are continuing to expand their teaching skills thanks to the "embedded" professional development provided by consulting teachers and time set aside within the week to work with their colleagues. Benwood teachers have also taken advantage of the Osborne Fellows Initiative. In 2001-

2002 only 36 percent of Benwood teachers had Masters Degrees, compared with 49 percent of teachers district wide. Today 51 percent of Benwood teachers have obtained a Masters, nearing the goal of matching the district-wide average (56 percent).

Surveys of parent and teacher satisfaction testify to the success of the reform. In 2006, 90 percent of Benwood parents surveyed indicated that they were satisfied with their children's schools. Surveys of teachers in the Benwood schools, and in traditionally high-performing schools, indicate that the differences in satisfaction that existed in 2004 were eliminated by 2006.

Encouraged by the success in narrowing achievement gaps with the eight Benwood schools, HCDE applied to the Benwood Foundation to expand its work to an additional eight schools, while continuing in the original schools. In July 2007 Benwood announced a new grant of \$7.3 million to support this work.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OUTCOMES

Hamilton County's middle school data show that great strides have been made already in eliminating achievement gaps between the high-needs schools and other schools in the district. Since reform efforts began in 2003, the percentage of middle school students scoring advanced and proficient in reading/language arts has risen across the county, but particularly in high needs schools. A 25.9 percentage point achievement gap in 2003 was reduced to a 19.9 percent gap in 2006. In those three years, the achievement gap in middle school math dropped from 25.8 percent to 17.4 percent. (See Table 11 in Appendix 1)

HIGH SCHOOL OUTCOMES

Hamilton County high schools, with the strong, focused union/district collaboration and support from PEF and funding partners, are making gains in promotion rates, on-time graduation rates, and numbers of graduates enrolled in college. The percent of ninth grade students receiving a "proficient" or "advanced" rating on the Algebra Gateway exam rose, as did performance of tenth graders on the English Gateway exams. (See Tables 12 and 13 in Appendix 1)

Hamilton County high school students now compare favorably when compared with other students across the state. Hamilton County high schools scored higher than the state average in five out of seven of the Gateway standards-based tests required for

graduation in 2006. Only ninth and tenth grade math scores did not meet or exceed the state average, although eleventh and twelfth grade math scores were above the state average.

Collaboration and communication are evident throughout the Hamilton County schools. Teachers are working together in new and effective ways to develop as teachers and to support student achievement. One teacher noted: "I am definitely a better teacher. When you are in the urban setting, challenges exist, but I have been able to implement better literacy strategies in the classroom."²⁰ Teachers have input and know that their work is valued. A principal offered this comment: "In HCDE there is now a lot of respect for what they (teachers in the urban schools) are doing and for the knowledge they bring to their work."²¹ A teacher from the same school added, "You would find us doing some of the same things, but you would find us doing them better. We ask every year, 'Did we do the best job possible we could?' Most say 'No'—they want to be even more effective. If they answer 'Yes' it is time to leave."²²

Hamilton County schools continue to make gains because of the collaboration of the HCEA and the HCDE and the community-wide partnership that supports their work. The HCEA remains a supportive, involved contributing partner in all aspects of the reform effort. While performing their traditional function of protecting teachers' rights, they were the first to come to the table to collaborate. Their commitment to work with the HCDE to examine contractual provisions and make revisions to support the reform effort is key to the county's success. Finally, the HCDE has assumed ownership—and devoted resources—for the reform initiatives when outside funds are no longer available. PEF continues to serve as a "critical friend" and principle change catalyst for the reform efforts. Funds from the other key partners—the Benwood Foundation, the NEA Foundation, the Lyndhurst Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation and others supporting the reform initiatives—flow through PEF as the central fiscal agent. This streamlines the process and brings greater coherence to what might otherwise be disparate efforts. The resources of the NEA Foundation and those provided by the Lyndhurst Foundation have been leveraged and combined as one initiative. The achievements in Hamilton County, Tennessee demonstrate that, through collaboration, systemic reform is more than possible—it is a reality.

²⁰Felicia Montgomery, teacher at Woodmore Elementary, personal communication, May 7, 2007.

²¹Emily Baker, Principal of East Side Elementary School, personal communication, May 7, 2007.

²²Allison Barham, a teacher at East Side, personal communication, May 7, 2007.

LESSONS FROM THE TWO DISTRICTS

Clark County and Hamilton County came to reform on different paths, and the reforms they implemented were unique, yet the lessons drawn from their stories will resonate with other districts seeking to improve education for all students. The following points will help guide school districts and teachers' unions as they seek to collaborate and achieve systemic school reform.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

- 1. Systemic reform cannot take place without the active formal and informal involvement of the district administration and the education association.** That point cannot be stressed enough; every other lesson flows from it. These two groups are the core of the reform effort, and their cooperation forms the foundation upon which other partners and funders are willing to invest the time and resources in working with the district.
- 2. All stakeholders must have a comprehensive, common vision that focuses on student learning and is guided by instructional improvement.** This common vision must be the focus of the reform plan, implementation design, investment of resources, professional development, monitoring, and assessments. It must be revisited regularly and modified as necessary throughout the process. The core of this vision for change must be the shared belief that all children—whatever their ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural background or prior academic success—can attain high levels of academic achievement.
- 3. It is extremely useful to create a dedicated time and retreat space where the key stakeholders can initially meet to work out the details of the reform plan.** In the case of Hamilton County, the NEA's Challenge of Change

Conference provided a place away from normal day-to-day operations where the key parties were able to get to know and trust one another. In Clark County, the time together learning to use the IBB provided that time and space.

- 4. Interest Based Bargaining creates a sound structure for working through issues and goals.** IBB shifts the focus of negotiations to the shared goal of student achievement. It is critical that all key stakeholders participate in the IBB training program. Those who find they cannot support the process should withdraw from the process. If a person who must withdraw has a key leadership position (i.e. superintendent, assistant superintendent of instruction, association president or UniServ Director), the capacity to collaborate may be in question and must be reconsidered.
- 5. All stakeholders must recognize and respect the fragile, critical and essential nature of trust relationships and must actively work to protect and nurture this trust, especially at the beginning of the process.** They must be willing to share needed information. If it is not possible to share certain kinds information, the reasons must be given with honesty. This also means that key stakeholders must be willing to work with their constituents to ensure that they understand the basis for and structure of the collaborative process.
- 6. All parties must keep their constituencies informed of the reform goals and progress.** Other representatives of stakeholder groups who are not operationally involved in the day-to-day working of the initiative (e.g., board members, other members of the superintendent's cabinet, foundation leadership, teachers, parents) should also be kept informed of the reform processes and progress, to ensure continuing support and later sustainability.

7. The stakeholder leaders should be ready to approach foundations and outside funders as a team, presenting a common agenda. When working with funders, leaders should emphasize their common goals, reputation for integrity and cooperation, and history of involvement in quality projects.

In short, building an atmosphere of inclusiveness, trust, and cooperation from the start is essential to the success of the partnership.

IDENTIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING SOLUTIONS

1. Assessing the gap between the goals of the project and the current status (and capacity) of available teachers, leaders, resources, data, parental and community support must be done before solutions can be identified and implemented. District and education association leadership must be personally involved in understanding the current status and implementation of solutions. Relevant stakeholders must collaborate on data collection and analysis throughout the reform process. Teacher recruitment, placement, and retention outcomes, for example, are key data elements that should be reviewed in relation to student achievement data. Teachers and parents should participate in each school's leadership team as it works to identify and implement specific school-based solutions.

2. Labor contracts must be examined to identify contractual provisions that could impede the reform efforts. The district and the education associations must be open to make contractual changes to support reform. Both parties must respect the legal responsibilities of the other in considering contractual changes. Stakeholders must be open to considering all viable solutions, even if they require revision to district or state policies or laws. District and education associa-

tions must be willing to restructure operations, staff assignments, budget allocations, and governance rules and regulations if needed to support the reform effort. In the most successful cases, the labor contract becomes a basis for ongoing negotiations. Issues that arise related to education reform should be negotiated immediately and updated in the contract, either formally or informally. A system of frequent and thorough communications helps to ensure that all parties support these modifications and additions.

3. Stakeholders must reach consensus on the selected solutions. If formalized IBB conversations are undertaken, they should continue until consensus is reached or it is determined that consensus cannot be reached. Consensus should be considered as “reached” when the last few people indicate that, although not totally sold on the solution, they can live with it and support it.

4. The reform effort should include:

- Teachers using data to inform their work, collaborating around goals and instructional strategies, and maintaining a common language for instruction.
- Professional development that is embedded in the work of the school and based on research on best instructional practices.
- A supportive induction process aimed at enhancing novice teacher effectiveness.
- Principals, assistant principals and other instructional leaders who focus on student success as the underlying goal of all activity, in an environment in which teachers hold themselves professionally accountable, and are treated fairly with respect as team members and encouraged to continually learn and improve their teaching.
- Frequent examination of the research on reform and consideration of how it informs local efforts.

GROWING AND SUSTAINING REFORM

1. **Planning documents must be viewed and accepted as living documents, subject to change as assessments reveal the need for adjustments.** Timelines should be reviewed regularly and adjusted as necessary. All stakeholders must understand the outcomes sought and how progress toward those outcomes will be monitored and communicated to the stakeholders. The outcomes of any element of the reform initiative and lessons learned should be closely reviewed as new components or initiatives are planned.
2. **Stakeholders who are not directly involved in the creation and implementation of the reform efforts must continue to be kept informed and reminded of the common vision, the collaborative process, the plan itself, progress in implementing the plan, and the intermediate outcomes in closing the achievement gap.** Stakeholders who are directly involved with the reform must communicate within their individual constituencies regularly and bring concerns to the leadership table before they become problems. This involvement will support the sustainability of the process as the leadership changes over time.
3. **Deliberate and focused efforts must be made to institutionalize the processes and support their sustainability as the leadership of the various partners begins to change.** Objective, trusted professionals who understand the collaborative process need to support and mentor the new stakeholders and re-teach the process to ensure that barriers do not develop in the working relationships.
4. **Strategies and resources must be established to build and sustain the capacity of those involved in the implementation of reform plan.** Elements include:
 - Professional learning communities and networks within schools, job-alike groups, and feeder school

alignments. For example, principals should convene regularly to share challenges, exchange strategies, and learn about emerging issues.

- Job-embedded professional development with coaching and mentoring.
 - University preparation programs for teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators revised and updated to meet the reform goals and challenges.
 - Internal leadership development for aspiring, new, and experienced leaders.
 - Relevant data made accessible to schools on a timely basis, along with professional development to guide educators and administrators on how to analyze and use data to inform their instructional decision-making.
5. **School leadership teams, administrators, and other reform leaders must hold themselves publicly accountable for the implementation of reform initiatives.** Public scrutiny and open reviews of progress and stumbling points are critical in maintaining support for and trust in the integrity of the reform effort.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

The tremendous achievements made by the collaborative efforts of the school district and union in Clark County and Hamilton County does not mean success came easily – it was hard work. And while challenges continue, the payoff is worth the effort. Some of the challenges both counties continue to face include:

Funding. As indicated by the case studies of both Clark and Hamilton Counties, assuring stable and continuing funding to support reform activities is a continuous challenge. The successful collaboration in both districts has enabled them to seek out additional resources and work together to determine creative uses of existing funds.

Communications. Continuous and effective communications are essential yet time consuming especially given that the make-up of the district and the community at large is ever changing.

Stereotypes and negative public perceptions of public education. Stereotypes and negative opinions can severely inhibit progress. The media can be powerful partners in telling the story and in providing effective communications at all levels to help to educate the public. Nonetheless, despite evidence of success, some people may never be persuaded.

Continual engagement of low-performing students. Teachers must be supported to engage their students so that each of them meets or exceeds standards. This work must evolve constantly as each student requires a unique set of strategies and supports, and new students are always entering the schools.

Ensuring that teachers and others effectively use data to inform instruction. New people will need training on the basics and seasoned educators will need retooling to ensure they understand data, make sound decisions based on that data, and share effective teaching strategies.

Changes in leadership. Change is a constant in schools and school districts. Superintendents, union presidents, principals, teachers and others who were instrumental to success retire or move. Embedding the continual transfer of knowledge and leadership development within a school district can be difficult to sustain when faced with the immediate needs of improving student achievement.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT POLICY CHANGE

This work is not easy, and the job is a constant one. But policy is a lever for institutionalizing change. Clearly the achievements made in Clark County and Hamilton County were the result of significant changes in policy brought about

by strong, effective collaboration. The list below highlights some of the partners, their roles and the policies that make change happen.

THE DISTRICT: STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. Superintendents and school boards alone are not enough to sustain a reform effort. Creating and building upon a district's vision must, from the beginning, involve the full range of stakeholders: education associations' leadership and members, parents, community members, and outside funders.
2. District leadership must create an expectation among all staff that reforms can and must succeed, demonstrating a commitment to sustain and support the vision and resulting policies and actions over the long haul, irrespective of changes in personnel.
3. The district must be open and willing to share information with stakeholders and to accept them at the table as meaningful partners.
4. Districts must be prepared to review and to reorganize their structure, their staff assignments, their resource allocation methodology, and their data collection and dissemination methods to support reform efforts.

THE ASSOCIATION: STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. Education associations must recognize that if reform efforts are going to succeed, they must be ready, willing and able to come to the table to find ways of improving schools for the sake of all children.
2. They must be willing to be active, participating partners in the reform effort—willing to consider contractual changes, pay incentives, changes to transfer procedures, and other key negotiation elements.

3. They must be willing to restructure their operations, staff and governance roles as necessary.
4. Among members and potential members, the association must be ready to establish itself—and its brand—as the trusted source for bringing teachers' professional knowledge to reform efforts and for taking initiative to support teaching and learning conditions that close achievement gaps and improve student achievement.
5. They must be ready to demonstrate to veteran teachers why the association is involved in the new focus of reform and building professional capacity rather than focusing only on hours, money and due process rights.
6. They must be ready to demonstrate to less experienced teachers that the education association is a key partner in helping them to be effective in the classroom and to help their students achieve.

OUTSIDE FUNDERS: STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. The leadership from outside funders must be ready to become partners in the effort to improve teaching and learning, ensuring results and equity. From the inception of reform initiatives, this partnership should include the education association.
2. The outside funder should be ready to serve as an objective “critical friend,” convener, facilitator and change agent.
3. Outside funders should work to build their own capacity to be supportive of reform efforts in which they participate and to adapt their own approaches to meet a district's particular circumstance and needs.
4. Outside funders should be willing to join others who come to the table to build a synergy and to leverage the resources available. When national funders consider joining or establishing local reform collaborations, they should first reach out to local funders and work with existing partnerships.

5. Outside funders should make the success of the reform effort their highest priority.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

School district and union collaboration is at the heart of the reform efforts in Hamilton County, Tennessee and Clark County, Nevada. These districts have been successful as they grappled with issues of urban neglect, failed schools, teacher turnover, and the critical need to find a better way to meet the educational needs of minority and low-income students. This look into the processes these systems used offers insights into how collaboration and partner building can occur in a thoughtful, deliberative, and mutually beneficial way.

It is important to note, however, that this kind of collaboration is not limited to those in hard-to-staff schools or school districts with substantial achievement gaps. The examples, strategies and guidelines serve as points to consider in establishing any partnership, large or small, based in high or low achieving schools and districts. In comparing Hamilton and Clark counties, the underlying goals remained constant—to build partnerships that promote and sustain student achievement, teacher and administrator engagement, and civic pride in schools. These should be the goals of every school and community.

At the heart of this report is the challenge of change. School districts must constantly evolve if they are to meet the needs of their changing student body. Change can be chaotic, disruptive, and destructive, or it can be harnessed in a constructive manner. Clark and Hamilton Counties took the latter path, rising to the occasion with creativity and determination to build better schools, ensuring that student achievement would be the ultimate manifestation of their reform efforts. Their stories—the tale of these two districts—stand as evidence that, with strong collaboration among key partners, districts can indeed change for the better and improve the educational fortunes of all the children in their community.

APPENDIX 1

TABLE 1
Selected Clark County School District Improvements, 2004-2006

	2004	2005	2006
Number of schools Making AYP		183	216
Number of schools NOT meeting AYP		149	123
High school graduates passing the Nevada High School Math Proficiency exam		86.9 %	88.4 %
Drop out rate for 9th-12th grade students	7.6 %		5.9 %
Scholarships awarded to CCSD graduates		\$97.5 m	\$108 m
Schools designated "exemplary" .		6	11
Number of "high achieving" schools		34	44

Source: Based on information provided by CCSD as written about in "No Child Left Behind." Las Vegas Review Journal. (July 29, 2007, p. 12B)

TABLE 2
Clark County School District Northeast Region Ethnic Profiles (Secondary), 2001-2005

Year	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Other	Total
2004-5	859	156	98	21	16	34	1,184
2003-4	729	115	82	16	13	25	980
2002-3	773	133	64	18	17	20	1,025
2001-2	742	120	54	15	13	20	964

Source: Northeast Region Ethnic Profiles (Secondary): 2001-2005. "What Makes Teachers Stay" 2006, CCSD.

TABLE 3
Clark County School District Northeast Region Ethnic Profiles (Elementary), 2001-2005

Year	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Other	Total
2004-5	1,409	163	127	57	16	50	1,822
2003-4	1,321	158	118	49	15	39	1,700
2002-3	1,271	156	101	43	17	39	1,627
2001-2	1,232	151	89	29	21	31	1,553

Source: Northeast Region Ethnic Profiles (Elementary): 2001-2005. "What Makes Teachers Stay" 2006, CCSD.

TABLE 4

Teacher Retention in CCSD 2006 vs. 2007
Percent of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers

	Stayers	Movers	Leavers
2006	61.60 percent	18.27 percent	20.63 percent
2007	71.15 percent	12.77 percent	16.08 percent
Change	10.05 percent	-5.5 percent	-4.55 percent

Source: Percent of Overall CCSD 2006 and 2007 Stayers, Movers and Leavers. Follow up Report: AB580 Assembly Bill 580: Programs of Performance Pay and Enhanced Compensation for the Recruitment, Retention and Mentoring of Licensed Personnel, 2007.

TABLE 5

CCSD AB580 (High Risk, High Attrition) Schools
Teacher Retention Gains by Region and School Level 2006 vs. 2007

Region	Elementary	Middle	High School
East	4.03 percent	16.19 percent	3.60 percent
NW	16.35 percent	17.28 percent	-3.71 percent
SE	10.82 percent	18.44 percent	6.65 percent
SW	17.88 percent	3.73 percent	11.07 percent

Source: UTP Resignations in Detail. Urban Teacher Program. 2007.

TABLE 6
Hamilton County vs. City of Chattanooga:
Demographic and School Performance Comparisons (1996-97)

	Hamilton County	City of Chattanooga
Caucasian	94.0 percent	34.8 percent
African American	4.1 percent	62.9 percent
Title 1 Participation	6.5 percent	30.8 percent
Title 1 Schools: Meeting Expectations	92.3 percent	20.0 percent
Title 1 Schools: Meeting Language Arts NRT Standard	92.3 percent	30.8 percent
Title 1 Schools: Meeting Mathematics NRT Standard	84.6 percent	30.8 percent
Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility	19.9 percent	59.0 percent

Source: Hamilton County vs. City of Chattanooga: Demographic and School Performance Comparisons (1996-97). Tennessee Department of Education, Report Card 2006. <<http://www.k-12.state.tn.us/rptcrd06/>>.

TABLE 7
Hamilton County vs. City of Chattanooga
Enrollment, Attendance, Promotion Rates and High School Dropout Rates (1996-97)

	Hamilton County	City of Chattanooga
Enrollment Increases or Decreases	0.9 percent	-2.0 percent
Attendance Rates: Grades K-6	95.59 percent	92.30 percent
Attendance Rates: Grades 7-12	93.99 percent	86.44 percent
Promotion Rates: Grades K-8	95.4 percent	95.5 percent
Dropout Rates: Grades 9-12	4.3 percent	7.1 percent

Source: Hamilton County vs. City of Chattanooga Enrollment, Attendance, Promotion Rates and High School Dropout Rates (1996-97). Tennessee Department of Education, Report Card 2006. <<http://www.k-12.state.tn.us/rptcrd06/>>.

TABLE 8

Percent of Benwood Students Scoring Advanced or Proficient
In Reading/Language Arts

	2003	2004	2005	2006	Change 2003-2006
3rd Grade Reading/Language Arts: Benwood	53.1 percent	63.0 percent	74.4 percent	73.1 percent	20.0 percent
3rd Grade Reading/Language Arts: District	76.8 percent	83.9 percent	89.1 percent	88.7 percent	11.9 percent
5th Grade Reading/Language Arts: Benwood	61.6 percent	62.5 percent	79.5 percent	80.7 percent	19.1 percent
5th Grade Reading/Language Arts: District	80.7 percent	83.7 percent	91.1 percent	92.0 percent	11.3 percent

Source: Number of Schools Receiving A's in Value Added on the Report Card. Tennessee Department of Education, Report Card 2006. <<http://www.k-12.state.tn.us/rptcrd06/>>.

TABLE 9

Number of Benwood Schools Receiving A's in Value Added Assessment
On the Tennessee Report Card
(A=exceptional)

	2001	2006
Reading/Language Arts	4 / 0	7
Math	0	8
Science	5	6
Social Studies	3	8

Source: Percent of Benwood Students Scoring Advanced or Proficient in Reading/Language Arts. PEF/HCDE, 2006. Benwood Initiative. Unpublished data.

TABLE 10

Percent of Benwood teachers new to their schools
(2001-2005)

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
26.2 percent	31.4 percent	23.8 percent	19.6 percent	17.9 percent

Source: Teacher Turnover in Benwood Schools (2001-2005). PEF/HCDE, 2006. Benwood Initiative. [Percentage of Teachers New to Benwood Schools]. Unpublished data.

TABLE 11

Hamilton County Percentage of 6-8th Graders Scoring Advanced & Proficient
(5 high-needs middle schools and all other middle schools), 2003-2006

	2003		2004		2005		2006	
	Reading/ Language Arts	Math						
Five High-Needs Middle Schools	56.0 percent	55.8 percent	57.5 percent	60.0 percent	63.6 percent	69.2 percent	69.7 percent	71.6 percent
Other Middle Schools	81.6 percent	81.6 percent	81.6 percent	82.0 percent	88.7 percent	89.2 percent	89.6 percent	89.0 percent

Source: Years of Teaching Experience in Benwood Schools Compared to Hamilton County Overall. PEF/HCDE, 2006. Benwood Initiative. [Teacher Profile]. Unpublished data.

TABLE 12

Hamilton County Improvements on High School Measures (2003-2006)

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Ninth to Tenth Grade Promotion Rates	77.3%	81.2%	83.5%	89.1%
Ninth Grade Algebra Gateway Performance: Proficient or Advanced	65%	65%	66%	67%
Tenth Grade English Gateway Performance	87%	89%	91%	94%
Number of Regular Diplomas Granted	1856	1909	1936	2148
Four-year Cohort "On-Time" Graduation Rates	69%	69.8%	70.2%	73.7%
Number of Graduates Enrolled in College		1313	1324	1499

Source: Tennessee State Gateway Test Results Compared to Hamilton County High Schools (2006). Great Schools: Parent's Guide to k-12 Success. Hamilton County, TN
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TABLE 13

Tennessee State Gateway Test Results Compared to Hamilton County High Schools (2006)

	State Average	Hamilton County
Ninth Grade Reading Language Arts	86	90
Ninth Grade Math	88	80
Tenth Grade Reading Language Arts	97	98
Tenth Grade Math	73	65
Eleventh Grade Reading Language Arts	79	84
Eleventh Grade Math	57	64
Twelfth Grade Reading Language Arts	72	79
Twelfth Grade Math	49	63

Source: Hamilton County Improvements on High School Measures (2003-2006). PEF/HCDE, 2006. MSNS Initiative. [SNS Initiative Metrics]. Unpublished data.

APPENDIX 2

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Howard School of Academics and Technology
Orchard Knob Middle School

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Lookout Valley

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Hamilton County Department of Education

Dr. Jim Scales, Superintendent 1997-2006
 Dr. Jesse Register, Superintendent 2006-Present
 David Cowan, Director of Middle Schools
 Emily Baker, Principal East Side Elementary School
 Visa Harper, Principal Woodmore Elementary School
 Linda Darden, Principal Dalewood Middle School
 Gary Kuehn, Principal of Hunter Middle School
 Herbert McCray, Principal Orchard Knob Middle School
 John Stewart, Principal Brown Middle School
 Mark Bean, Principal East Ridge High School
 Gail Chewy, Principal Red Bank High School
 Julie Davidson, Assistant Principal Brown Middle School
 Clara Smith, Assistant Principal Orchard Knob Middle School
 Felicia Montgomery, Teacher Woodmore Elementary School
 Susie Hall, Teacher Hunter Middle School
 Jill Hudson, Teacher Hunter Middle School
 Rosa Huntz, Teacher Brown Middle School
 Debbie McMahan, Academic Coach, Brown Middle School
 May Pardlow, Teacher Dalewood Middle School
 Susan Thurman, Change Coach Red Bank High School

Hamilton County Education Association

Sandra Hughes, President
 Ronda Catanzaro, Executive UniServ Director
 Gerry Dowler, Executive UniServ Director, Retired

Public Education Foundation

Dan Challenger, President
 Faye Pharr, Leadership Coach Benwood Initiative
 Ismahen Kangles, Director Middle Schools for a New Society, Middle School Reform Initiative
 Bill Kennedy, Director Schools for a New Society High School Reform Initiative
 Leslie Graitcer, Coordinator Osborne Fellows Program
 Anne Kilcher, Communications
 Deb Vaughan, Data Analyst

Lyndhurst Foundation

Jack Murrah, President Lyndhurst Foundation

NEA Foundation

Carol Edwards, Director of Programs, Retired

Clark County School District

Ruth Johnson, President Board of School Trustees
 Sheila Moulton, Member Board of School Trustees
 Karlene Lee, Associate Superintendent
 George Ann Rice, Associate Superintendent, Retired
 Karyn Wright, Director New Teacher Induction and Teacher Professional Development
 Roseanna Gallagher, Principal Rose Warren Elementary School
 Rebecca Johnson, Principal Kirk Adams Elementary School
 Lisa Primas, Principal Paul Culley Elementary School
 Linda Reese, Principal Lee Antonello Elementary School
 Will Dickerson, Teacher Paul Culley Elementary School
 Karen Kip, Teacher Rose Warren Elementary School
 Ruth Lawrence, Teacher Rose Warren Elementary School
 Brendan McCarthy, Teacher Paul Culley School
 Michelle Mull, Teacher Kirk Adams Elementary School
 Diane Refosco, Teacher Lee Antonello Elementary School
 Heather Somers, Teacher Lee Antonello Elementary School
 Vicki Weathers, Teacher Kirk Adams Elementary School

Clark County Education Association and Negotiations Team

John Jasonok, Executive Director
 Bill Vick, Teacher and Chairman of the Negotiations Team
 Vikki Courtney, Teacher, Member of Negotiations Team and also the Climate Team
 Cindy Johnson, Teacher, Member of Negotiations Team and also the Climate Team
 Phil Palucci, Teacher, Member of Negotiations Team and also the Climate Team
 Carolyn Stewart, Teacher, Member of Negotiations Team and also the Climate Team

Other

Debbie Cahill, Nevada State Education Association
 LaVonne Ritter, Director Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Clark County
 Martha Young, Professor University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The Parties hereby enter into this Settlement Agreement in resolution of negotiations for a successor agreement which shall be comprised of the following:

1. Reform Turnaround Schools agreement in the form attached as Appendix A.
2. Reform Side Letter attached as Appendix B.
3. Wage schedules attached as Appendix C.
4. Health Insurance Plans attached as Appendix D.
5. The revised transfer language attached as Appendix E.

All other proposals shall be deemed withdrawn. The agreement summarized above shall be incorporated into a complete collective bargaining agreement for the term July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2014.

Dated: October 2, 2009

CITY OF NEW HAVEN and
NEW HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION

NEW HAVEN FEDERATION OF
TEACHERS

By _____
John DeStefano, Mayor

By _____
David Ciccarella
President

By _____
Dr. Reginald Mayo, Superintendent

{00272854.DOC Ver. 1}

APPENDIX A

TURNAROUND SCHOOLS

Introduction: The New Haven Board of Education (NHBOE) and The New Haven Federation of Teachers, Local 933, (NHFT) agree that one of the approaches to achieving their mutual goal of ensuring success for all students, and particularly those in low performing schools, is to create "Turnaround Schools." Turnaround Schools are those Tier III schools that are identified for reconstitution and that require both additional supports and flexibility. These schools need to be free to choose their staffs, develop new cultures of successful performance and learning, redesign work rules, modify the length of the instructional day and year, scheduling, instruction programs and pedagogy .

It is expressly agreed that Turnaround Schools shall remain public schools within the District and that employees shall maintain their representation by the New Haven Federation of Teachers. In order to achieve flexibility, the Parties agree that Turnaround Schools must be free from many Board regulations and policies and from many sections of the Parties' collective bargaining agreement. Such schools may be designated for operation by third party managers and may be or have the characteristics of in-district charter schools. To that end, the Parties agree that the Board/Superintendent, through contracts with third party school operators, may delegate its authority to manage and direct teachers in the operation of the school, consistent with this Appendix and the Agreement of which it is a part.

It is the intent of the Parties that teachers and administrators in these schools will work collaboratively to create effective learning environments for students. Teachers, other school staff and parents shall have a voice in designing programs and determining work rules that are likely to be successful in such schools.

- I. **Status of NHBOE Employees Who Work in Turnaround Schools:** All teachers who elect and are selected to work in Turnaround Schools shall maintain their full status as members of the NHFT bargaining unit and as employees of the NHBOE.
 - A. Teachers shall continue to receive the compensation set forth in Article XII, 1-12, of the Parties collective bargaining agreement (the Agreement) and the benefits set forth in Article XIII of the Agreement, subject to possible adjustment as set forth in IV below.
 - B. Teachers will maintain their status under the Connecticut Teacher Retirement System.
 - C. Teachers will continue to be subject to the rights, protections, obligations and duties applicable to certificated employee under Connecticut Law.
 - D. Teachers will maintain and continue to accrue seniority as teachers within the District.
 - E. When working in a school operated by a third party, teachers shall be subject to the direction and management of the third party operator, consistent with this Appendix and the Agreement of which it is a part.

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II. Assignment and Transfer: Teachers shall work in Turnaround Schools on a voluntary basis. When a school is designated as a Turnaround School, existing staff will be invited to apply along with other staff, but the Principal shall have the authority to determine which applicants will be accepted. After completing an initial two-year commitment to the school, teachers who request a transfer shall be transferred to other schools within the District without penalty, except that no teacher who is on a plan of improvement may transfer except with the permission of the Superintendent. After two years, standard transfer rights will apply. Upon transfer to a regular school (non-Turnaround), teacher compensation shall be what is paid at the regular school.

Teachers at a school to be reconstituted who are not selected to staff the Turnaround School shall be transferred to another District teaching position for which the teacher is certified. No NHFT member shall be laid off as a direct result of the creation of Turnaround Schools.

III. Working Conditions in Turnaround Schools

Turnaround Schools shall continue to follow state and federal laws and regulations. They shall be exempt from many School Board regulations and District policies and shall likewise be exempt from many provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Turnaround Schools shall strive for a model of collaboration and shared decision-making at the school site.

A. As expressly set forth below, certain provisions of the NHBOE-NHFT Collective Bargaining Agreement shall remain in full force and effect at all times during this agreement. In addition to those provisions referred to in Section I above, the following provisions of the Agreement, cannot be waived or in any way modified by the Board or the School, and shall continue to apply with full force to unit members who work in Turnaround Schools.

- Preamble
- Article I (Recognition, Rights and Obligations of the Parties)
- Article II Sections 1(Fair Disciplinary Policy), and 16 (Student Behavior)
- Article II Section 10(Teacher's Notice by Superintendent)
- Article III (Grievance Procedure) – subject to Section B, below.
- Article V (Federation Rights)
- Article VI (Absences and Leaves of Absences)
- Article VIII (Personnel Files and Evaluation)
- Article XI (Teacher Protection)
- Article XIV (Conformity to Law and Savings Clause)
- Article XV (Layoffs)
- Article XVII Sections 1 & 2 (Cooperative Educational Planning)

- Article XIX (Duration)
 - Appendices A,B & E, except that compensation is subject to adjustment as specified in Section IV below.
- B. The foregoing Articles shall continue to be subject to the Grievance provisions of the Agreement. All other matters shall not be subject to the contractual Grievance provisions and, instead, are subject to the Internal Appeals Process set forth below.
- C. The provisions of this Appendix are not intended to narrow or expand the rights of the District or NHFT to be less or greater than that provided by law, except as specifically set forth in this Appendix. If there is a conflict between a specific provision of this Appendix and legal requirements, all other non-conflicting sections of this Appendix shall remain in full force and effect.

IV. Work Year, Work Day, Etc.

- A. Prior to electing to work at a Turnaround School, teachers shall be informed of plans for the school, including relevant information about working conditions and compensation. Teachers shall sign an Election to Work Agreement, which sets forth the working conditions at their school. The Election to Work Agreement shall include the following information:
- The vision and expected instructional program of the school.
 - The hours of instruction and school day with expected degrees of flexibility.
 - The length of the school year and the school calendar.
 - The expected length of time teachers may be required to be present in the school outside the normal instructional day.
 - The commitment to remain in the school for at least two years.
 - Any compensation programs that apply to the particular school different from the standard compensation schedule.

The Election to Work Agreement shall clearly state that teachers should expect year-to-year, or even intra-year, flexibility in aspects of their duties and program not covered by the agreement, including but not limited to timing/scheduling of faculty meetings to respond to school conditions, and/or scheduling and manner of professional and staff development.

- B. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, Turnaround Schools shall, at a minimum, provide at least the number of student instructional days and the amount of instructional minutes as other District schools.
- C. The Parties agree that the initial Election to Work Agreement shall be created by school leadership and shall be given to affected staff no later than March 15 of the

previous school year. Subsequent modifications shall be made in accordance with the following procedure:

1. The terms of the proposed Agreement will be presented in writing to the teachers at least five working days before a vote of the teachers is taken.
2. A secret ballot vote will be conducted by the NHFT Building Representative and the Principal during a mandatory meeting of teachers held during work time in the building. Teachers unable to be present for the meeting may vote by absentee ballot.
3. During this meeting and prior to the vote, the Principal, a union representative and any teachers who wish to do so may express their views about the merits of the proposed Agreement. Upon request, the teachers will be afforded time to discuss the Agreement without the presence of any administrators.
4. A decision to accept the proposed agreement must be made by at least 2/3rds of the teachers voting.

If the Election to Work Agreement for an upcoming school year has not been approved by March 15, the previous year's Election to Work Agreement shall remain in place.

- V. **Governance of Turnaround Schools:** Each Turnaround School shall be governed by the Principal under the direction of the Superintendent and Board of Education or other designated school leader (under the terms of an RFP or contract approved by the Superintendent and Board of Education, which may not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Agreement). In each school, an Advisory Council, composed of teachers, parents and community leaders, shall be created, and the AC shall make recommendations regarding program, budget and changes to the Election to Work Agreement. For purposes of hiring after the initial year, the School Planning Management Team shall provide input. The Board and Superintendent shall retain their full legal authority to manage these schools except to the extent such authority is expressly limited by this agreement.
- VI. **Collaborative Review:** Review of all Turnaround Schools shall be provided by a Reform Committee, the composition of which is defined in Paragraph 5 of the Side Letter to the 2006-2010 Contract and Amendment to the 2010-2014 Contract Regarding Reforms. This Committee shall review all Turnaround Schools and procedures, including selection of school leaders, school performance, and operational procedures and practices both to encourage success and to identify practices and approaches that should be duplicated or avoided.
- VII. **Internal Appeals Process**
- A. The following internal appeals process shall be made available to teachers at each Turnaround School unless an alternative process has been adopted at the school with the consent of the Reform Committee.

- B. A complaint under the IAP is limited to allegations that the written terms of this Appendix or of an Election to Work Agreement has been violated or misapplied.
- C. Every teacher in a Turnaround School shall receive a copy of the IAP.
- D. Every locally developed IAP shall provide that if a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the school level, a final decision will be made jointly by the Superintendent of Schools/designee and the President of the Union/designee.
- E. A "day" for purposes of the timelines of this IAP is defined as any day of the calendar year except Saturdays, Sundays, legal or school holidays. The time limits of this IAP are intentionally expedited to achieve early resolution, and are expected to be adhered to by all parties. Time limits may be extended or waived, but only by mutual written agreement.

The steps of this IAP are as follows:

1. Informal meeting Between the Grievant and School Leader: Within five (5) days after the aggrieved employee became aware (or should have become aware) of the occurrence of the event(s) upon which the grievance complaint is based, the aggrieved employee must request an informal meeting with the school leader to discuss the matter and attempt in good faith to resolve it. The meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request. A representative of the Union may be present upon the request of the grievant.
2. Formal meeting Between the Grievant, School Leader and Other Relevant Individuals: If the grievance is not resolved within five (5) days of the informal meeting in Step 1, the grievant may continue the process by filing a written grievance. The grievance shall state the relevant facts and identify the specific provisions of this document which he or she feels have been violated. The School Leader shall convene a meeting to review and discuss the grievance within five (5) days of receipt of the written grievance. The School Leader and grievant shall invite to the meeting all individuals who have relevant information or who are in a position to meaningfully contribute to prompt resolution of the grievance. If the grievance is not resolved, within five (5) days of this meeting, the School Leader shall issue a written decision regarding the grievance. If the grievance is denied, the School Leader shall explain in writing the full reasons for the denial.
3. Meeting With Superintendent/Designee and Union President/Designee: Within five (5) days of receiving a written denial from the School Leader, the grievant may request a meeting with the Superintendent/Designee and Union President/Designee. They will hear the matter promptly. If they are unable to resolve the grievance, they shall so inform the grievant in writing within five (5) days of the meeting and they shall at the same time refer the matter to the two-member Alternate Claim Panel for final resolution.

4. Submission to Alternate Claim Panel: The assigned members of the Joint Panel shall convene the parties to learn the facts and hear the parties' contentions, and then shall use their mutual best efforts to reach agreement upon the appropriate final decision. It is anticipated that they will be able to do so. However, in the event that they are deadlocked, the Superintendent/Designee and the Union President/Designee shall designate one of the Panel Members as the decision maker (and the other as an advisor), based upon the principle of alternating between which of the parties will make the designation. The designation will not be made until it is necessary to do so.

5. Joint Panels: The Board and the Union shall each designate an equal number of retired District employees to serve as a pool of Joint Panel members. Such appointments shall be made each March for the ensuing school year. The total number of such appointees shall be determined by the parties each year based on anticipated need, but shall not be fewer than eight (four each). The Board and Union shall each make all reasonable good faith efforts to select their designees on the basis of perceived school experience, reputation for fairness and judicious character. Such appointees shall then be divided into two-member teams to serve together for the remainder of the school year.

APPENDIX B

**SIDE LETTER TO THE 2006-2010 CONTRACT AND AMENDMENT TO THE
2010-2014 CONTRACT REGARDING REFORMS**

This Agreement is made this _____ day of _____ by and between The Board of Education of the City of New Haven (the Board) and The New Haven Federation of Teachers, Local 933, NHFT, AFL-CIO (the NHFT or Union) (collectively, the Parties).

WHEREAS the Board and Union have agreed on a statement of shared beliefs about the need for and appropriate direction of reform in the New Haven public schools, a copy of which is appended to and incorporated by reference in this document;

WHEREAS the Parties believe that a sharper focus and greater priority on student performance is needed at all layers of the School District and that meaningful reform requires effective action at all layers;

WHEREAS the School District believes that school and central office administrators as well as teachers are accountable for student and school performance, the District will ensure that the administrator evaluation process reflects this belief;

WHEREAS the Board and Union have engaged in extensive, collaborative discussions regarding steps that could be taken by and between them to improve the education of District students and to make District schools more effective;

WHEREAS the Board and Union have agreed to implement a number of these steps during the 2009-10 school year through the creation and activities of several committees, an agreement that requires a side letter to the 2006-2010 contract;

WHEREAS the Parties have reached additional agreements which are to be included as an amendment to their 2010-2014 collective bargaining agreement;

WHEREAS, the Board and Union agree that these steps can best be understood and effectively implemented if they are collected and recited together in this single document, which will serve both as a side letter to their current contract and an amendment to their successor agreement;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board and Union agree as follows:

1. Transition Steps. The Parties agree that details regarding implementation of several of their conceptual agreements must be developed through the work of joint committees, and that these committees must perform this work promptly during the 2009-10 school year so that agreements can be implemented by the 2010-11 school year.

- a. Measurement of Student Progress. One task of the Reform Committee (See Paragraph 4, below) shall be to assess and recommend improved measures of progress in student learning as well as measurement of environmental factors that may impact student learning.
 - i. The first meeting of the Committee for this purpose shall be convened prior to November 1, 2009.
 - ii. The Administration shall provide technical assistance to the Committee as requested.
 - iii. The Committee shall make its initial recommendations to the Board no later than January 15, 2010. A copy of these recommendations will be provided to the Union. In addition, the Committee shall make a progress report to the Superintendent and Union no later than November 15, 2009.

- b. Use of Data on Student Progress in Teacher Evaluations. The Parties agree that student progress should be a factor in teacher evaluation and that a joint committee should assess and make recommendations on how progress in student learning can best be incorporated in the teacher evaluation process.
 - i. The Teacher Evaluation Committee constituted for the District Improvement Plan, as adjusted, will undertake this task.
 - ii. The Teacher Evaluation Committee will coordinate with the Reform Committee, which is examining measurement of student progress in order to be able promptly to utilize that committee's recommendations.
 - iii. The Committee shall make its initial recommendations to the Board (with a copy to the Union) no later than March 15, 2010, in order to implement any changes for the 2010-11 school year. Prior to that, the Committee will communicate written progress reports to the Board (with a copy to the Union) every month.
 - iv. If the Union objects to any of the Committee's recommendations, the Parties agree promptly to meet and confer to try to resolve any differences.

- c. Peer Assistance and Review. During the 2009-10 school year, the Parties will work collaboratively to design a peer assistance and review program. If the Parties are unable to reach agreement on the details of such a program, either may reject its use.
 - i. The Parties direct the Teacher Evaluation Committee to design a program providing for peer review of teacher performance and for peer assistance to teachers in need of improvement.

- ii. The Committee's recommendations shall be presented to the Board and the Union no later than February 15, 2010.
 - iii. No later than April 1, 2010, the Parties shall meet and confer regarding the availability of resources to support the program and how the uses may best be focused to implement it during the 2010-11 school year.
- d. Differentiated Teacher Ratings. The Parties agree that it would benefit both the District and teachers if teachers were evaluated using a more differentiated set of summative categories than the current choice of satisfactory/unsatisfactory.
 - i. The Parties agree that the Teacher Evaluation Committee shall be charged with the task of devising and recommending a teacher evaluation process that results in the differentiation of teachers and their various strengths and weaknesses across at least 4 categories.
 - ii. The Committee shall make its recommendations on this issue to the Board with a copy to the Union no later than April 15, 2010.
- 2. Fair and Effective Teacher Evaluation, Assistance and Dismissal. The Parties agree that it shall be appropriate for the Board to terminate as incompetent under the Connecticut Teacher Tenure Act a tenured teacher who is: (a) fairly evaluated, (b) timely notified that he or she has significant deficiencies in his or her teaching performance, (c) provided an opportunity for appropriate assistance, and (d) who nevertheless fails successfully to accomplish an appropriate improvement plan. The Parties further agree that if a teacher is notified of an unsatisfactory evaluation by November 1 of the school year, an appropriate improvement plan need not last longer than 120 calendar days in order to provide the teacher with an adequate opportunity to improve, except when the teacher experiences extraordinary obstacles beyond his or her control or demonstrates improved performance which may, in the judgment of the Board and Union, warrant a second year of improvement. This agreement is not intended to change the fact that evaluations and their consequences are not subject to the grievance procedure of the contract.
- 3. Special Compensation. The Parties agree that the Board will be permitted to propose a midterm program of compensation enhancements of two types, and that if it does so, the Parties will bargain in good faith over such proposals. If no agreement is reached, the issue(s) shall be resolved through interest arbitration. The two types of enhancements are as follows:
 - a. School-based bonuses recognizing substantial student progress. If such enhancements are proposed, the parties will negotiate the criteria for determining substantial student progress, the amounts of such bonuses and how the distribution of such bonuses would be determined, including the

possibility that distribution would be determined by personnel in the designated schools. If such bonuses are proposed, they must be made to schools in all tiers.

- b. Compensation Enhancements for Differentiated Roles and Other Activities. Compensation enhancements may be proposed in connection with various roles, including but not limited to the peer assistant/evaluator. Such roles shall be made available to those teachers who demonstrate the highest levels of validated performance per the District's evaluation system, irrespective of seniority. Enhancements may also be offered in connection with other activities, including but not limited to agreeing to teach in certain schools, such as reconstituted schools.

4. Work Rules and Variations in Different Schools.

- a. Determination of School Tiers. The Board will consult with and consider any recommendations offered by the NHFT concerning the criteria used for defining tiers and how schools are assigned to tiers. Although the allocation of schools to tiers is recognized by the Parties to be a management right, the Parties acknowledge the Union's right to demand effects bargaining where that decision has an impact on mandatory subjects of bargaining.
- b. Waiver of Work Rules in Tier I and II Schools. Schools in Tier I or Tier II may seek to waive certain school work rules. In order for such a waiver to be effective, the following conditions must apply:
 - i. The waiver must be approved by the teachers in the school. A waiver will be considered approved by the teachers if the following occur:
 - 1. The terms of the waiver are presented in writing to the teachers at least five working days before a vote of the teachers is taken.
 - 2. A secret ballot vote will be conducted by the NHFT Building Representative and the Principal during a mandatory meeting of teachers held during work time in the building.
 - 3. During this meeting and prior to the vote, the Principal, a union representative and any teachers who wish to do so may express their views about the merits of the waiver. Upon request, teachers may also receive time during the meeting to discuss the waiver proposals without administrators present.
 - 4. Seventy-five or more percent of the teachers voting must vote to approve the waiver.
 - ii. The school Principal must approve the waiver

- iii. The waiver is subject to review and denial by either the Superintendent/designee or NHFT, if it is determined by either that the waiver is not in the best interests of the students. If either party rejects the waiver, that Party shall be required to explain at the next Board meeting in public session how, in its view, the waiver would not be in the best interest of students.
 - iv. Work rules that may be waived are: Article II, Sections 3-8, 12 and 13.
- c. Board's Right to Make Program Changes In Tier III Schools. In Tier III schools, the Board shall have the right to make programmatic changes and/or restructure duties and assignments during the existing workday that may impact work rules and compensation provided that:
- i. Any proposed changes shall first be discussed by the Reform Committee or a school committee designated for such purpose by the Reform Committee;
 - ii. Proposed changes to the current practice in either the # of hours worked per day or the # of days worked per year shall be presented to the teachers no later than March 15th of the prior school year for implementation the following September:
 - 1. Increases in the amount of time required in a day and/or any increases in the # of work days per year shall be compensated on a pro-rata basis at the rate of the average salary of the impacted teachers or other agreed upon benefit in lieu of compensation.
- d. Program Flexibility in Turnaround Schools. In any Tier III schools that the Board determines are to be reconstituted, the Board shall have a heightened degree of flexibility in designing and changing instructional programs. These schools shall be subject to Appendix A.
5. School Improvement and Continued Collaboration Regarding Reform.
- a. Joint Reform Committee. A joint "Reform Committee" shall be established for the purpose of monitoring application of this Amendment, resolving collaboratively any issues that may arise in its implementation, and such other tasks as may be assigned by this Document or by the Parties. The Committee shall be composed of eight members, including 3 administrators appointed by the Superintendent, 3 teachers appointed by the Union President, and 2 parents appointed by the Superintendent (one of which is recommended by the Union President). The Committee shall be chaired by the Superintendent/Designee, who shall not have a vote.

- b. School Climate Surveys. The Board intends to develop surveys to assess how various stakeholders view schools and their leaders, and it agrees to consult with and consider Union recommendations with respect to the design and implementation of such surveys.
- 6. Coordination with the CBA. If this Amendment conflicts in any respect with the CBA, the Parties intend this Amendment to control. The Board retains any management rights not expressly limited by the provisions of this Amendment. The Parties retain all legal rights not expressly limited by the provisions of this Agreement.
- 7. Duration. This agreement shall take effect when signed by the parties. It is intended to remain in effect until termination of the contract currently being negotiated by the Parties.